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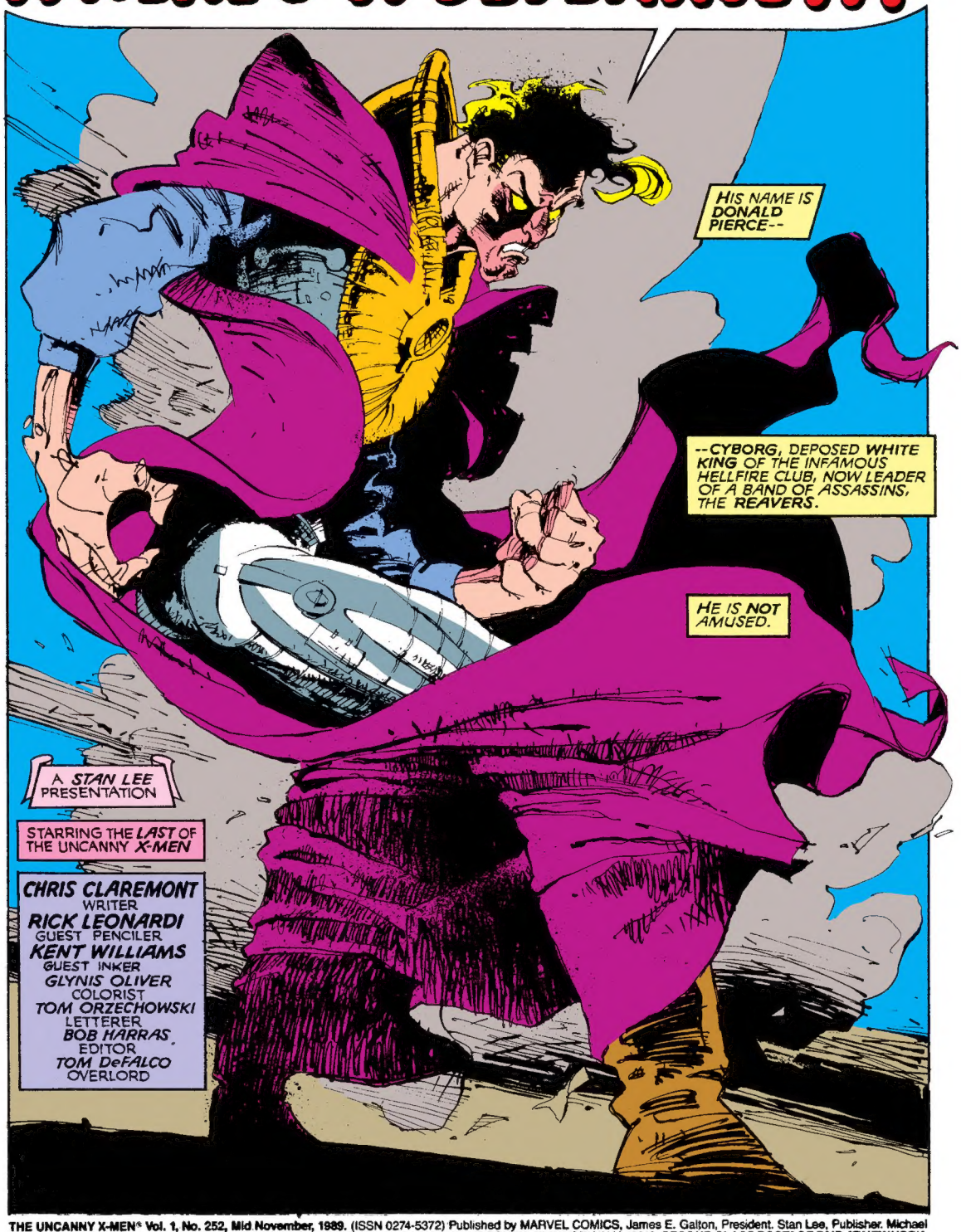
WHERE'S WOLVERINE?!?



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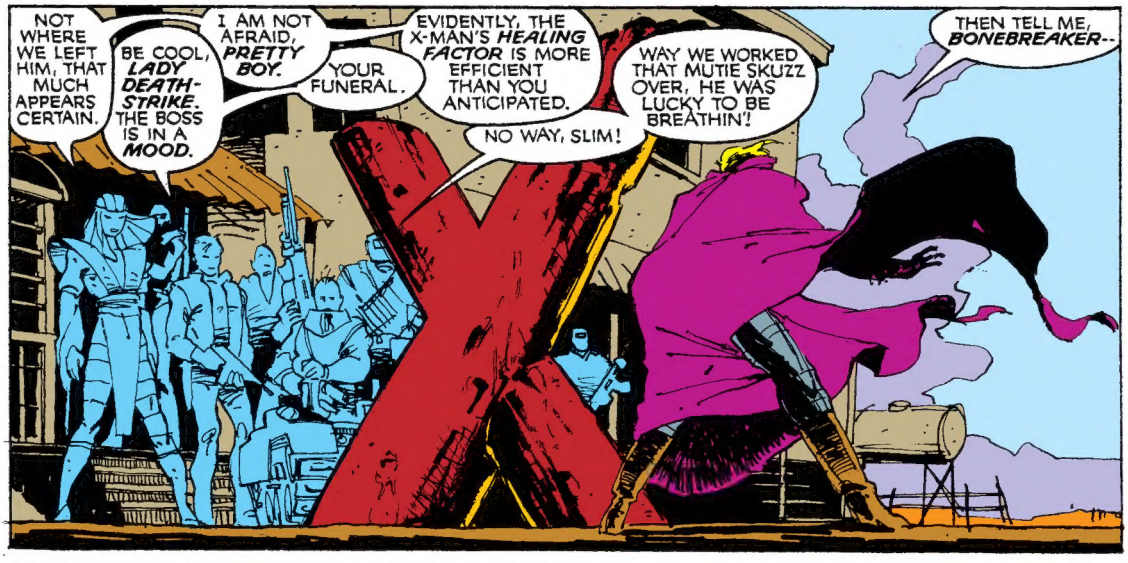
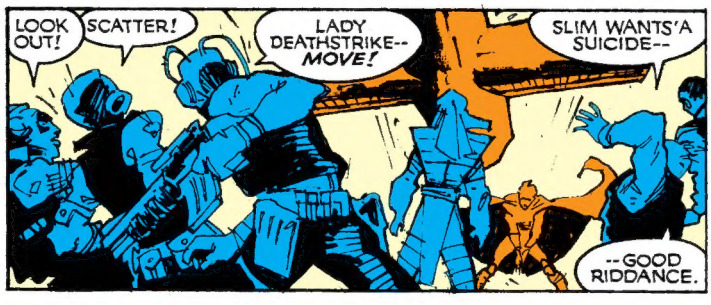
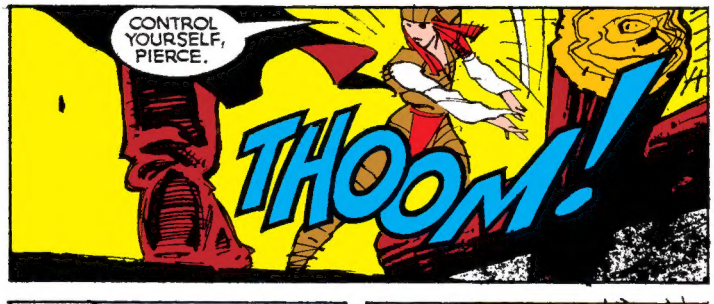

NOT WHERE WE LEFT HIM, THAT MUCH APPEARS CERTAIN.
BE COOL, LADY DEATH-STRIKE. THE BOSS IS IN A MOOD.
I AM NOT AFRAID, PRETTY BOY.
YOUR FUNERAL.
EVIDENTLY, THE X-MAN'S HEALING FACTOR IS MORE EFFICIENT THAN YOU ANTICIPATED.
NO WAY, SLIM!
WAY WE WORKED THAT MUTIE SKUZZ OVER, HE WAS LUCKY TO BE BREATHIN'!
THEN TELL ME, BONEBREAKER--

--WHERE HE'S GONE?!!
RRRAKT!

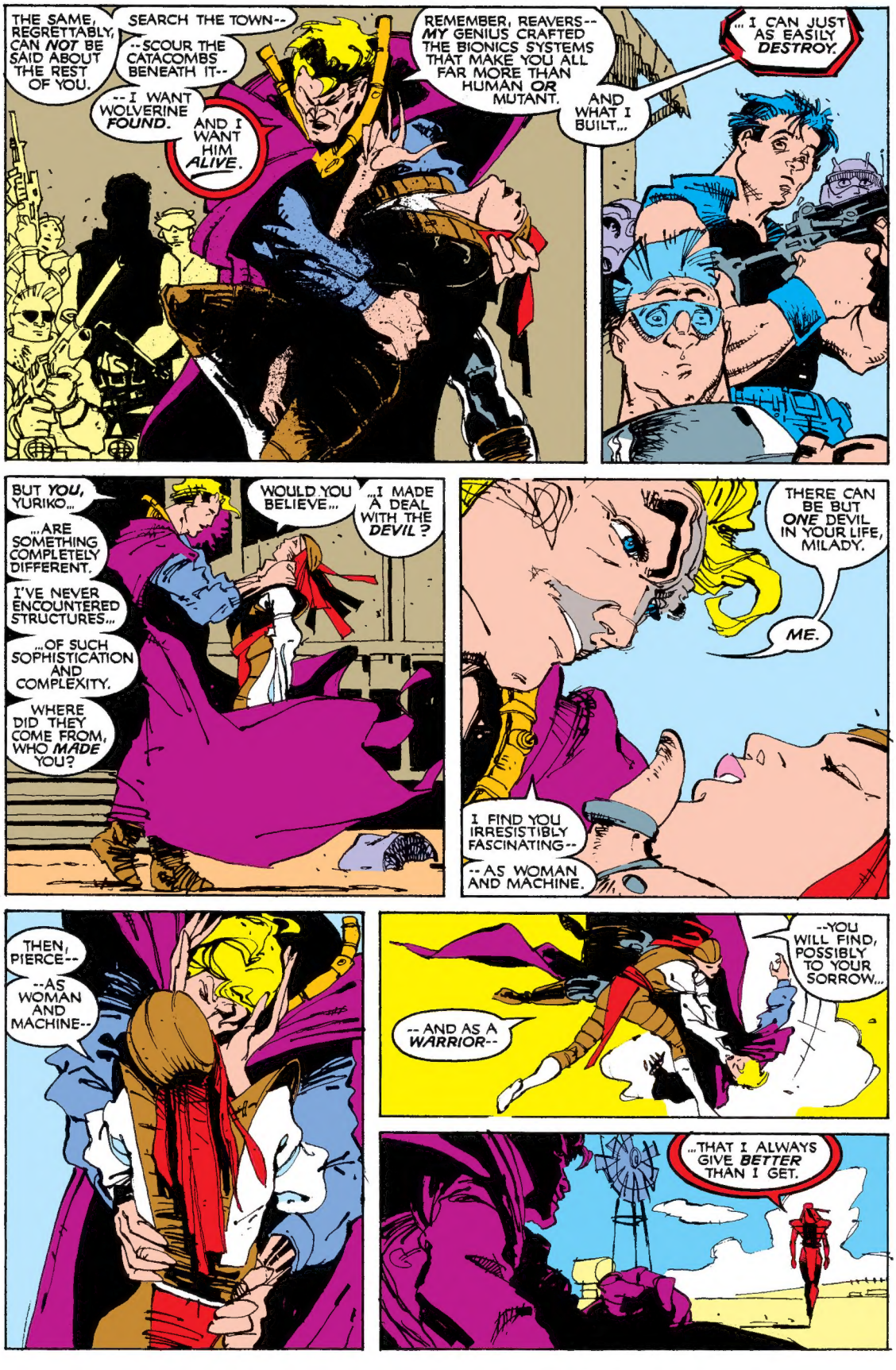

LOOK OUT!
SCATTER!
LADY DEATHSTRIKE-- MOVE!
SLIM WANTS'A SUICIDE--
--GOOD RIDDANCE.


CONTROL YOURSELF, PIERCE.
THOOM!

SUCH A DISPLAY IS UNSEEMLY...
...IN A LEADER OF MEN.
YOU DARE DEFY ME, WOMAN!

MY LIFE MAY BE YOURS FOR THE TAKING, LORD.
BUT IF SO--
--I SHALL NOT DIE ALONE!

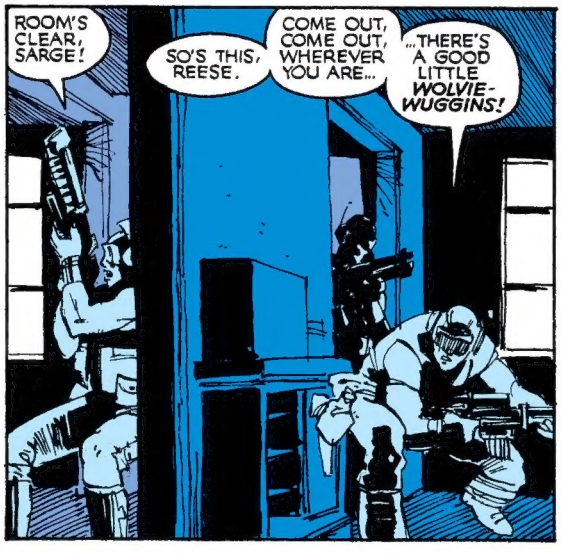
COURAGE AND SPIRIT--
--I LIKE THAT!
BY THE ETERNAL--
--I LIKE YOU!


THE SAME, REGRETTABLY, CAN NOT BE SAID ABOUT THE REST OF YOU.
SEARCH THE TOWN--
--SCOUR THE CATACOMBS BENEATH IT--
--I WANT WOLVERINE FOUND.
AND I WANT HIM ALIVE.
REMEMBER, REAVERS-- MY GENIUS CRAFTED THE BIONICS SYSTEMS THAT MAKE YOU ALL FAR MORE THAN HUMAN OR MUTANT.
AND WHAT I BUILT...
...I CAN JUST AS EASILY DESTROY.
BUT YOU, YURIKO...
...ARE SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED STRUCTURES...
...OF SUCH SOPHISTICATION AND COMPLEXITY.
WHERE DID THEY COME FROM, WHO MADE YOU?
WOULD YOU BELIEVE...
...I MADE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL?
THERE CAN BE BUT ONE DEVIL IN YOUR LIFE, MILADY.
ME.
I FIND YOU IRRESISTIBLY FASCINATING--
--AS WOMAN AND MACHINE.
THEN, PIERCE--
--AS WOMAN AND MACHINE--
--AND AS A WARRIOR--
--YOU WILL FIND, POSSIBLY TO YOUR SORROW...
...THAT I ALWAYS GIVE BETTER THAN I GET.

BY THE NUMBERS, TROOPS--
--STAY LOOSE, STAY FR--!
DON'T SAY IT, REESE!
MAN, EVERY-BODY SAYS IT!
AIN'T LIKE WE'RE AMATEURS OR NOTHIN', SARGE.
WE KNOW OUR BUSINESS.
HOUSE SCANS CLEAN.

DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. X-MEN ARE ALL INVISIBLE TO ELECTRONIC SENSORS.
I GOT THE DOOR.

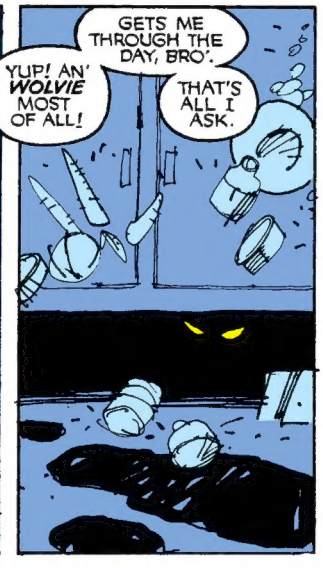
COLE COVER HIGH, MACON GO LOW--
NOW!
KRAM!


ROOM'S CLEAR, SARGE!
SO'S THIS, REESE.
COME OUT, COME OUT, WHEREVER YOU ARE...
...THERE'S A GOOD LITTLE WOLVIE-WUGGINS!

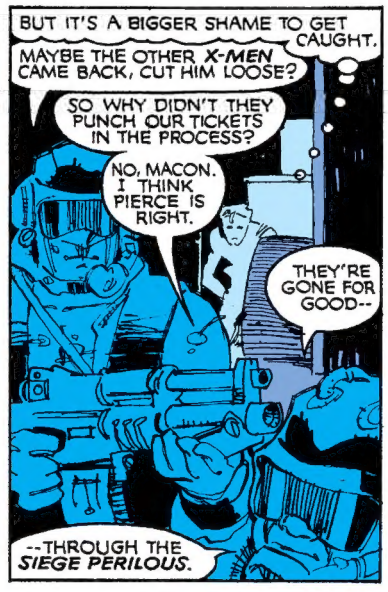
KNOCK IT OFF, COLE.
CHECK THE KITCHEN.
I'LL TAKE THE UPSTAIRS.
ON IT, SARGE.

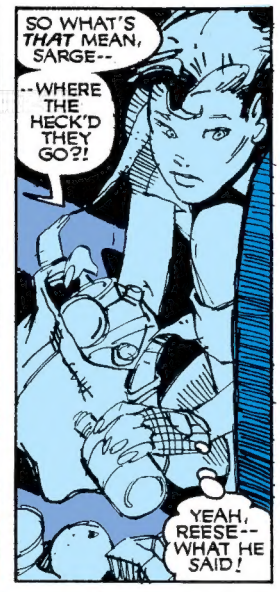
Shee-OOT! WILLYA LOOK AT THIS, MACON--
--FRUIT JUICE AN' MINERAL WATER--
--NOT A BEER T' BE FOUND--
--BIMBO DON'T KNOW HOW TO TREAT HER BODY DECENT!

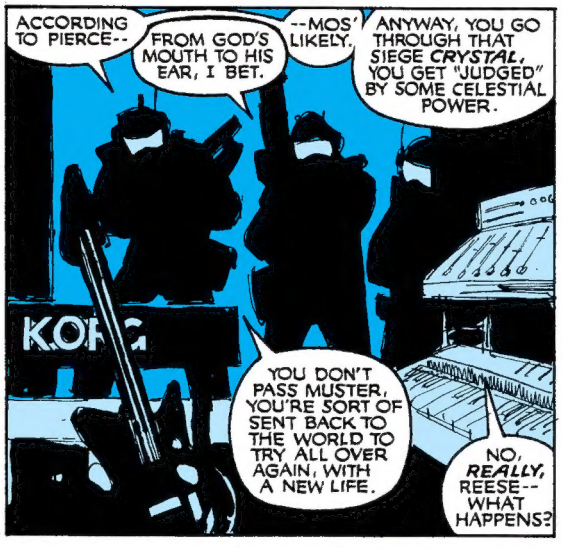
CRIPES, I HATE HEALTH FOOD!
YOU HATE EVERY-THING, COLE.

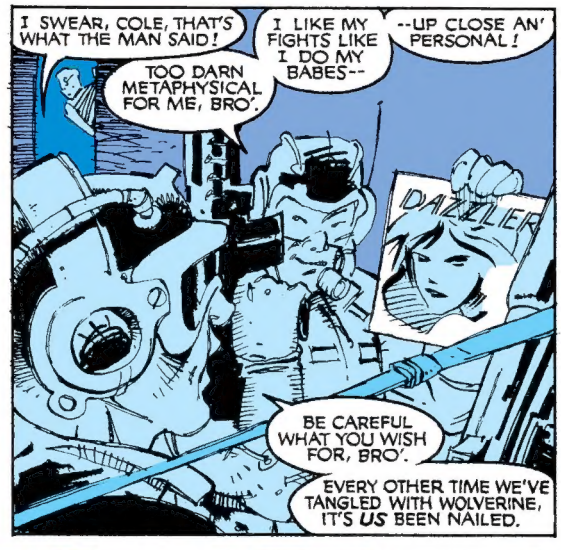

YUP! AN' WOLVIE MOST OF ALL!
GETS ME THROUGH THE DAY, BRO'.
THAT'S ALL I ASK.

NICE SET O' BERSERKOS.
AN' WOULDJA BELIEVE THE MOUTH ON THESE GUYS!
TOO RUDE!
LOTTA FOOD,
SHAME TO LET IT GO TO WASTE.


BUT IT'S A BIGGER SHAME TO GET CAUGHT.
MAYBE THE OTHER X-MEN CAME BACK, CUT HIM LOOSE?
SO WHY DIDN'T THEY PUNCH OUR TICKETS IN THE PROCESS?
NO, MACON. I THINK PIERCE IS RIGHT.
THEY'RE GONE FOR GOOD--
--THROUGH THE SIEGE PERILOUS.


SO WHAT'S THAT MEAN, SARGE--
--WHERE THE HECK'D THEY GO?!
YEAH, REESE--WHAT HE SAID!


ACCORDING TO PIERCE--
FROM GOD'S MOUTH TO HIS EAR, I BET.
--MOS' LIKELY.
ANYWAY, YOU GO THROUGH THAT SIEGE CRYSTAL, YOU GET "JUDGED" BY SOME CELESTIAL POWER.
YOU DON'T PASS MUSTER, YOU'RE SORT OF SENT BACK TO THE WORLD TO TRY ALL OVER AGAIN, WITH A NEW LIFE.
NO, REALLY, REESE--WHAT HAPPENS?

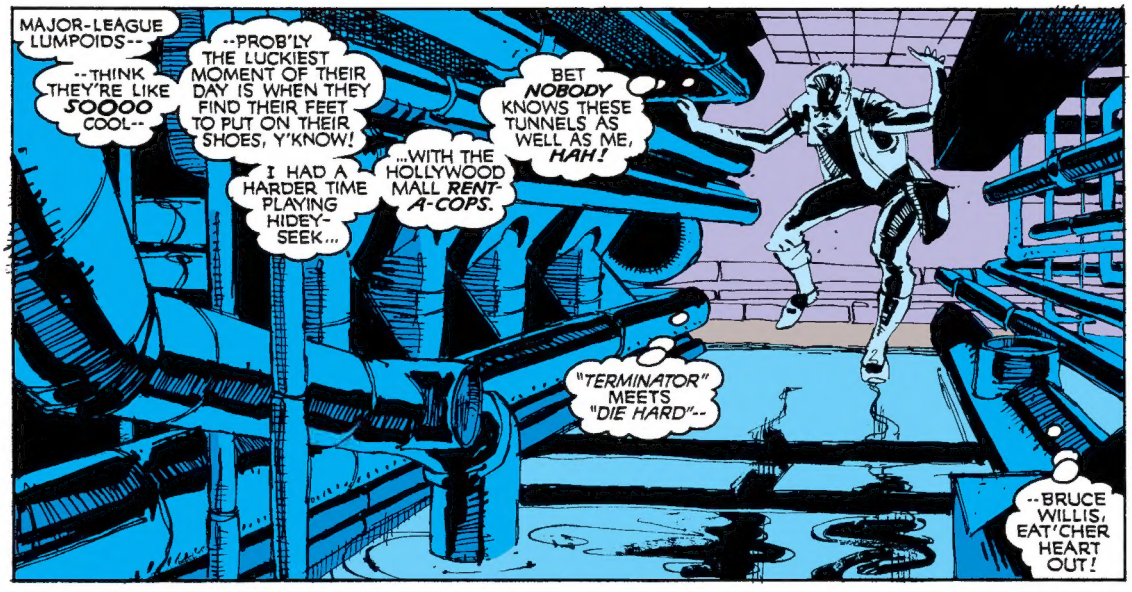

I SWEAR, COLE, THAT'S WHAT THE MAN SAID!
I LIKE MY FIGHTS LIKE I DO MY BABES--
--UP CLOSE AN' PERSONAL!
TOO DARN METAPHYSICAL FOR ME, BRO'.
DAZZLER
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR, BRO'.
EVERY OTHER TIME WE'VE TANGLED WITH WOLVERINE, IT'S US BEEN NAILED.

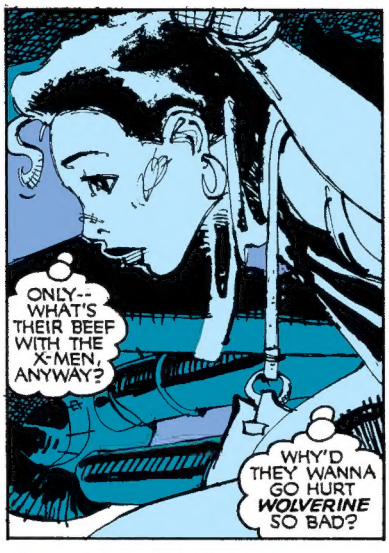
LONGER WE TAKE TO SMOKE HIM OUT, HEALTHIER HE'LL BE--AN' MORE DANGEROUS.
WAY YOU'RE TALKIN', REESE, THIS TOWN'S THE "NOSTROMO." WE'RE THE CREW...
... AN' HE'S THE "ALIEN."
YOU GOT IT, COLE.

SHOOT!

THIRD TRY'S THE CHARMER, REESE.
THAT MUTIE'S LUCK HAS JUST RUN OUT!

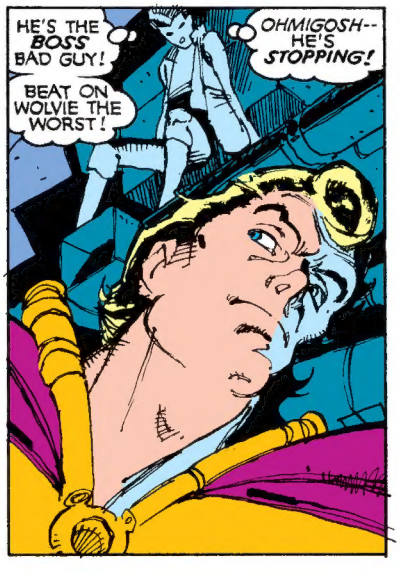
WRONG, SKUZZWAD--
--IT'S THIRD STRIKE, YOU'RE OUT!

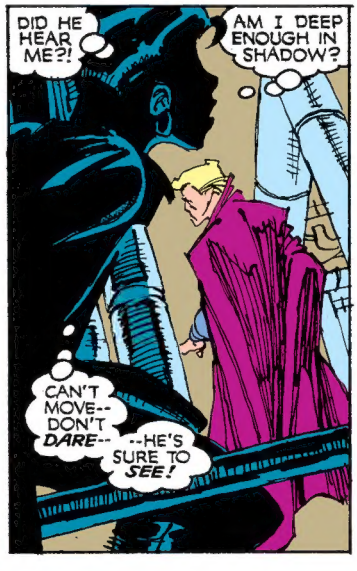

MAJOR-LEAGUE LUMPOIDS--
--THINK THEY'RE LIKE SOOOO COOL--
--PROB'LY THE LUCKIEST MOMENT OF THEIR DAY IS WHEN THEY FIND THEIR FEET TO PUT ON THEIR SHOES, Y'KNOW!
I HAD A HARDER TIME PLAYING HIDEY-SEEK...
...WITH THE HOLLYWOOD MALL RENT-A-COPS.
BET NOBODY KNOWS THESE TUNNELS AS WELL AS ME, HAH!
"TERMINATOR" MEETS "DIE HARD"--
--BRUCE WILLIS, EAT'CHER HEART OUT!


ONLY-- WHAT'S THEIR BEEF WITH THE X-MEN, ANYWAY?
WHY'D THEY WANNA GO HURT WOLVERINE SO BAD?

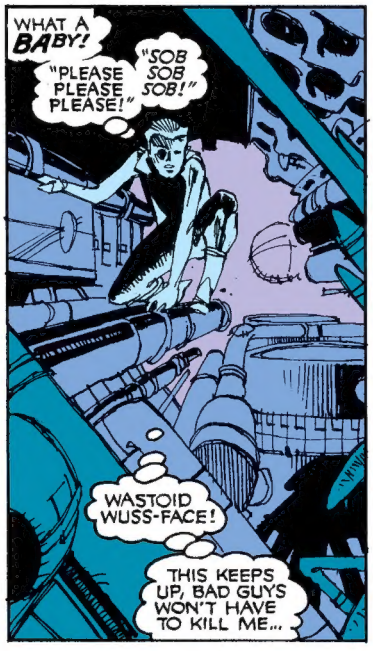
AN', LIKE, WHAT'LL THEY DO TO ME...
...IF THEY CATCH ME HELPING--

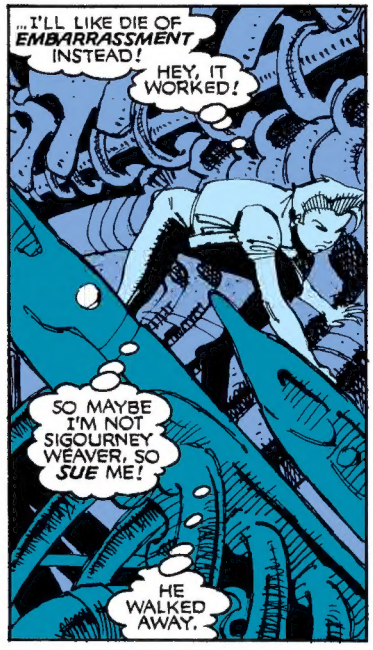
--GASP!?!
PIERCE!


HE'S THE BOSS BAD GUY!
OHMIGOSH-- HE'S STOPPING!
BEAT ON WOLVIE THE WORST!

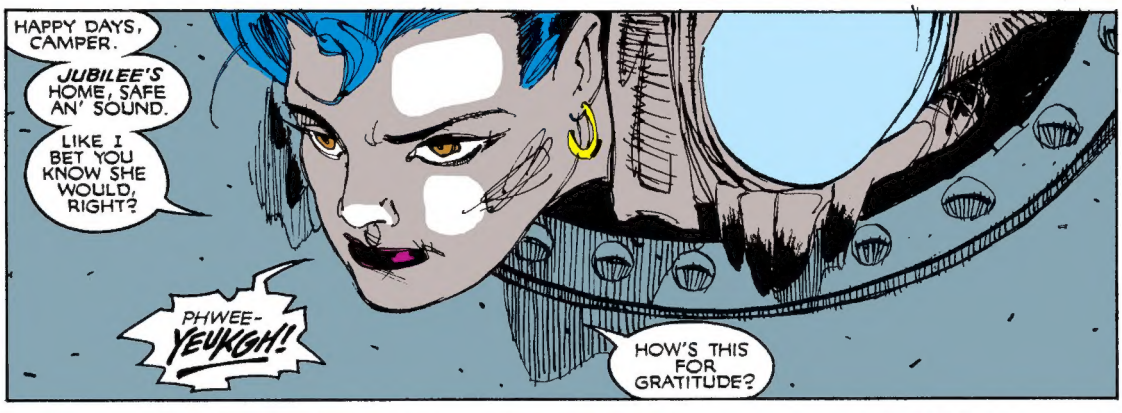

DID HE HEAR ME?!
AM I DEEP ENOUGH IN SHADOW?
CAN'T MOVE-- DON'T DARE--
--HE'S SURE TO SEE!

PLEASE DON'T LOOK PLEASE GO AWAY DON'T DO ANYTHING TO MAKE HIM NOTICE
HEART BEATING SO FAST SO LOUD HOW CAN HE NOT NOTICE
PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE
PASS ME BY!

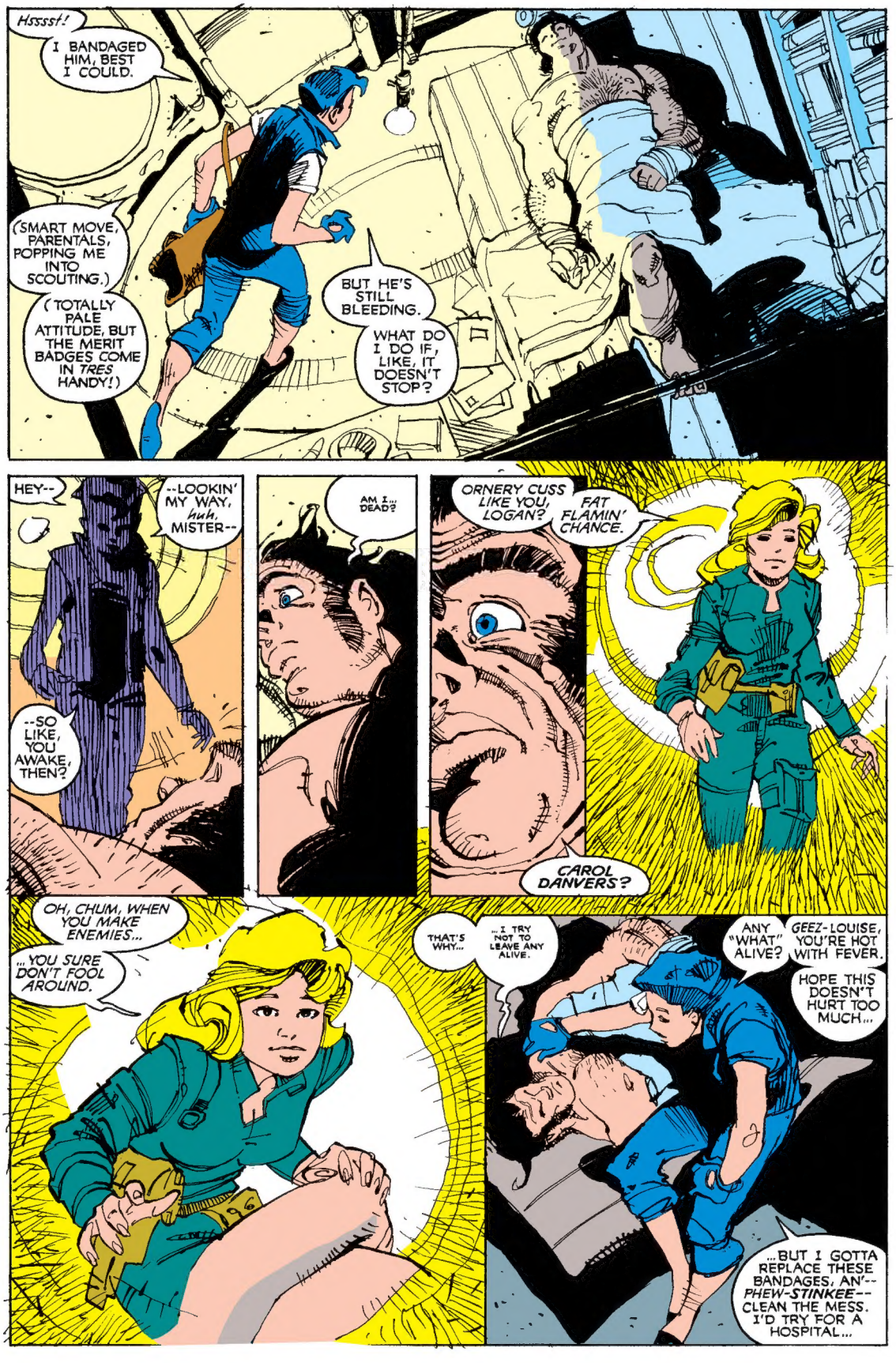

WHAT A BABY!
"PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!"
"SOB SOB SOB!"
WASTOID WUSS-FACE!
THIS KEEPS UP, BAD GUYS WON'T HAVE TO KILL ME...

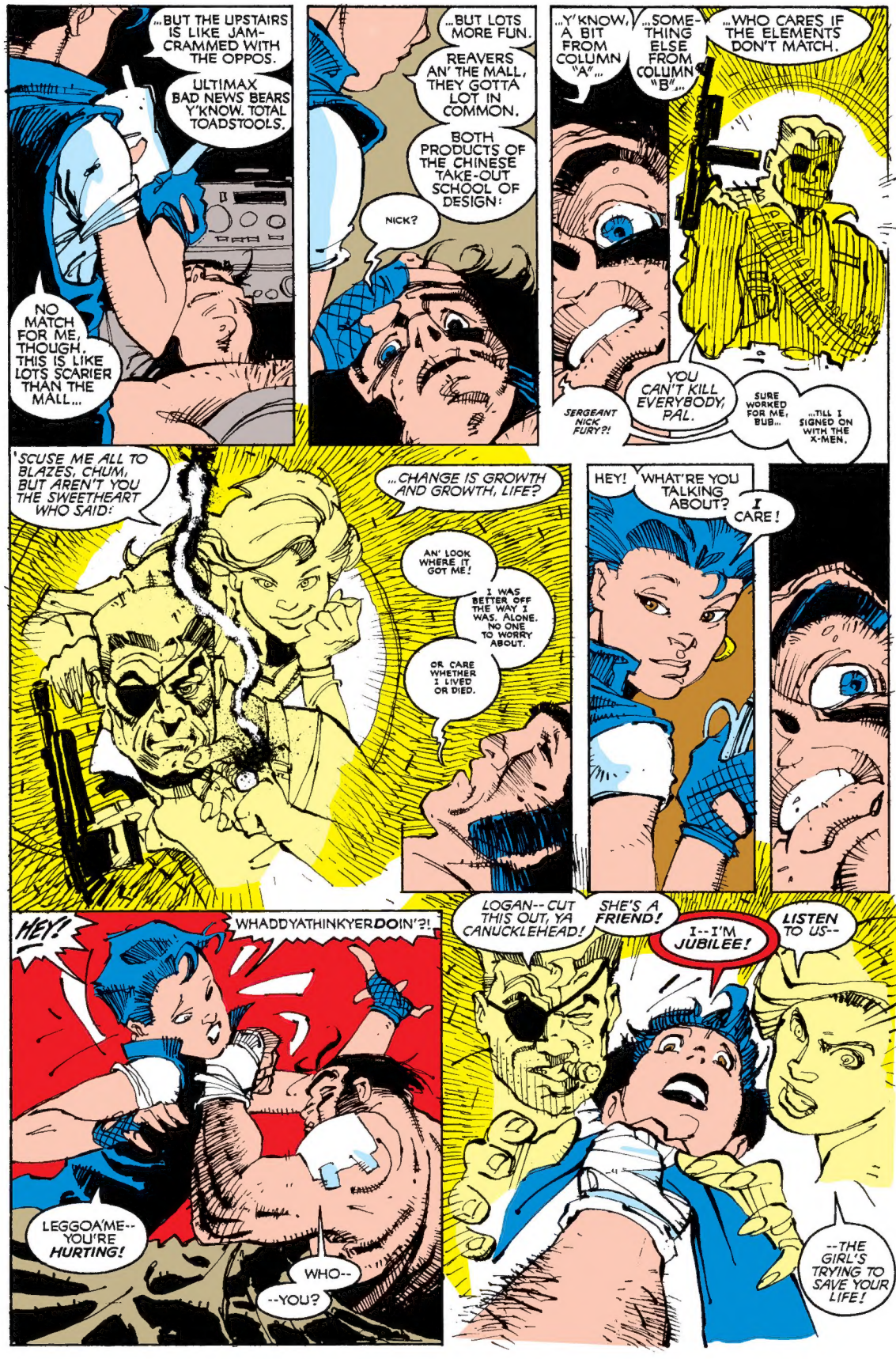

...I'LL LIKE DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT INSTEAD!
HEY, IT WORKED!
SO MAYBE I'M NOT SIGOURNEY WEAVER, SO SUE ME!
HE WALKED AWAY.

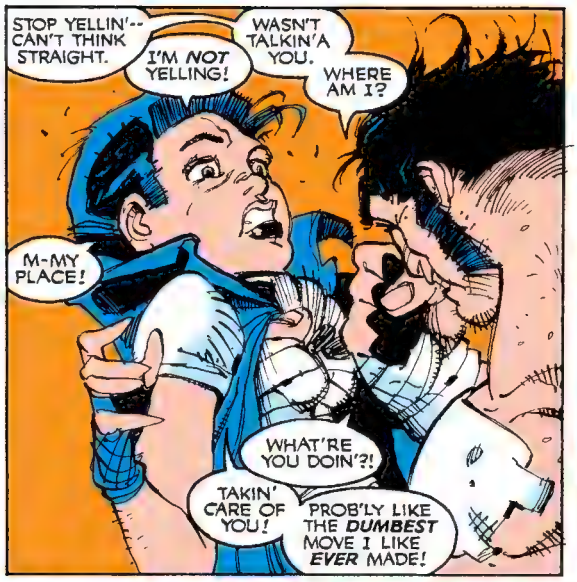
I WAS SO SCARED.
I HATE THAT.


HAPPY DAYS, CAMPER.
JUBILEE'S HOME, SAFE AN' SOUND.
LIKE I BET YOU KNOW SHE WOULD, RIGHT?
PHWEE-YEUKGH!
HOW'S THIS FOR GRATITUDE?

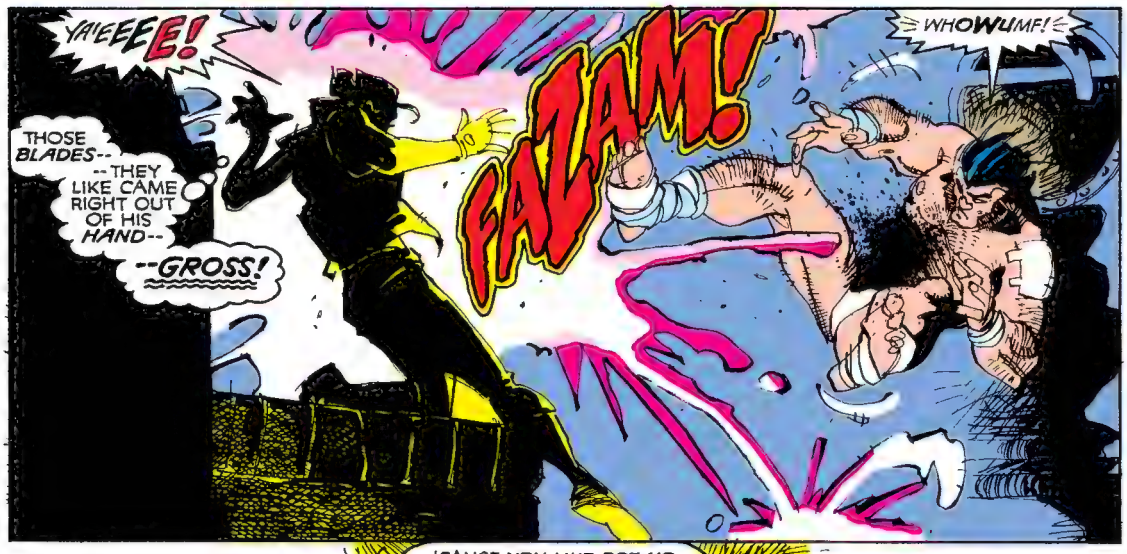
I LIKE BUNK THE MAN DOWN IN MY HOUSE, IN MY VERY OWN BED...
...AN' HE TURNS IT INTO A MONDO-GARBAGO STINKHOLE!
BE CHARITABLE, SLICK--
--HE PROB'LY CAN'T HELP THIS ANYMORE THAN YOU COULD, BACK IN THE TUNNEL.

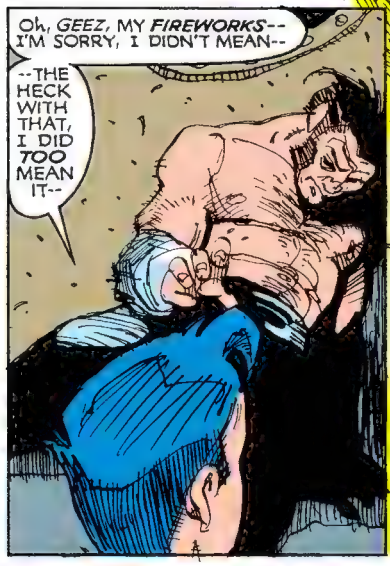

Hssssf!
I BANDAGED HIM, BEST I COULD.
(SMART MOVE, PARENTALS, POPPING ME INTO SCOUTING.)
(TOTALLY PALE ATTITUDE, BUT THE MERIT BADGES COME IN TRES HANDY!)
BUT HE'S STILL BLEEDING.
WHAT DO I DO IF, LIKE, IT DOESN'T STOP?
HEY--
--LOOKIN' MY WAY, huh, MISTER--
--SO LIKE, YOU AWAKE, THEN?
AM I... DEAD?
ORNERY CUSS LIKE YOU, LOGAN?
FAT FLAMIN' CHANCE.
CAROL DANVERS?
OH, CHUM, WHEN YOU MAKE ENEMIES...
...YOU SURE DON'T FOOL AROUND.
THAT'S WHY...
...I TRY NOT TO LEAVE ANY ALIVE.
ANY "WHAT" ALIVE?
GEEZ-LOUISE, YOU'RE HOT WITH FEVER.
HOPE THIS DOESN'T HURT TOO MUCH...
...BUT I GOTTA REPLACE THESE BANDAGES, AN'-- PHEW-STINKEE-- CLEAN THE MESS. I'D TRY FOR A HOSPITAL...

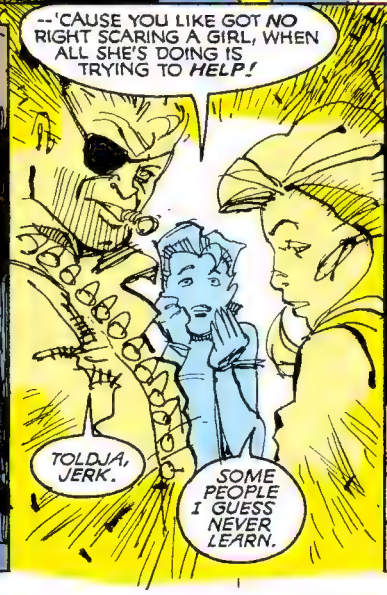

...BUT THE UPSTAIRS IS LIKE JAM-CRAMMED WITH THE OPPOS.
ULTIMAX BAD NEWS BEARS Y'KNOW. TOTAL TOADSTOOLS.
NO MATCH FOR ME, THOUGH. THIS IS LIKE LOTS SCARIER THAN THE MALL...
...BUT LOTS MORE FUN.
REAVERS AN' THE MALL, THEY GOTTA LOT IN COMMON.
BOTH PRODUCTS OF THE CHINESE TAKE-OUT SCHOOL OF DESIGN:
NICK?
...Y'KNOW, A BIT FROM COLUMN "A"...
...SOMETHING ELSE FROM COLUMN "B"...
...WHO CARES IF THE ELEMENTS DON'T MATCH.
SERGEANT NICK FURY?!
YOU CAN'T KILL EVERYBODY, PAL.
SURE WORKED FOR ME, BUB...
...TILL I SIGNED ON WITH THE X-MEN.
'SCUSE ME ALL TO BLAZES, CHUM, BUT AREN'T YOU THE SWEETHEART WHO SAID:
...CHANGE IS GROWTH AND GROWTH, LIFE?
AN' LOOK WHERE IT GOT ME!
I WAS BETTER OFF THE WAY I WAS. ALONE. NO ONE TO WORRY ABOUT.
OR CARE WHETHER I LIVED OR DIED.
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I CARE!
HEY!
WHADDYATHINKYERDOIN'?!
LEGGOA'ME-- YOU'RE HURTING!
WHO--
--YOU?
LOGAN-- CUT THIS OUT, YA CANUCKLEHEAD!
SHE'S A FRIEND!
I-- I'M JUBILEE!
LISTEN TO US--
--THE GIRL'S TRYING TO SAVE YOUR LIFE!

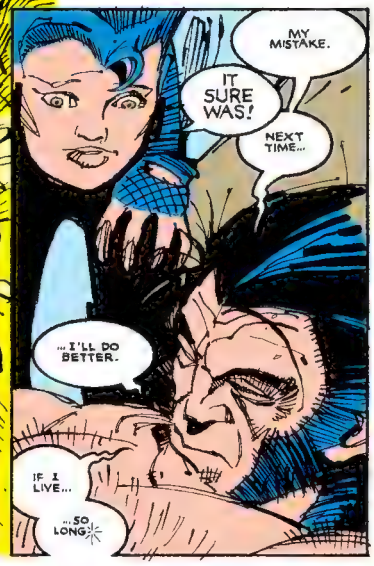

STOP YELLIN'-- CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT.
I'M NOT YELLING!
WASN'T TALKIN'A YOU.
WHERE AM I?
M-MY PLACE!
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?!
TAKIN' CARE OF YOU!
PROB'LY LIKE THE DUMBEST MOVE I LIKE EVER MADE!

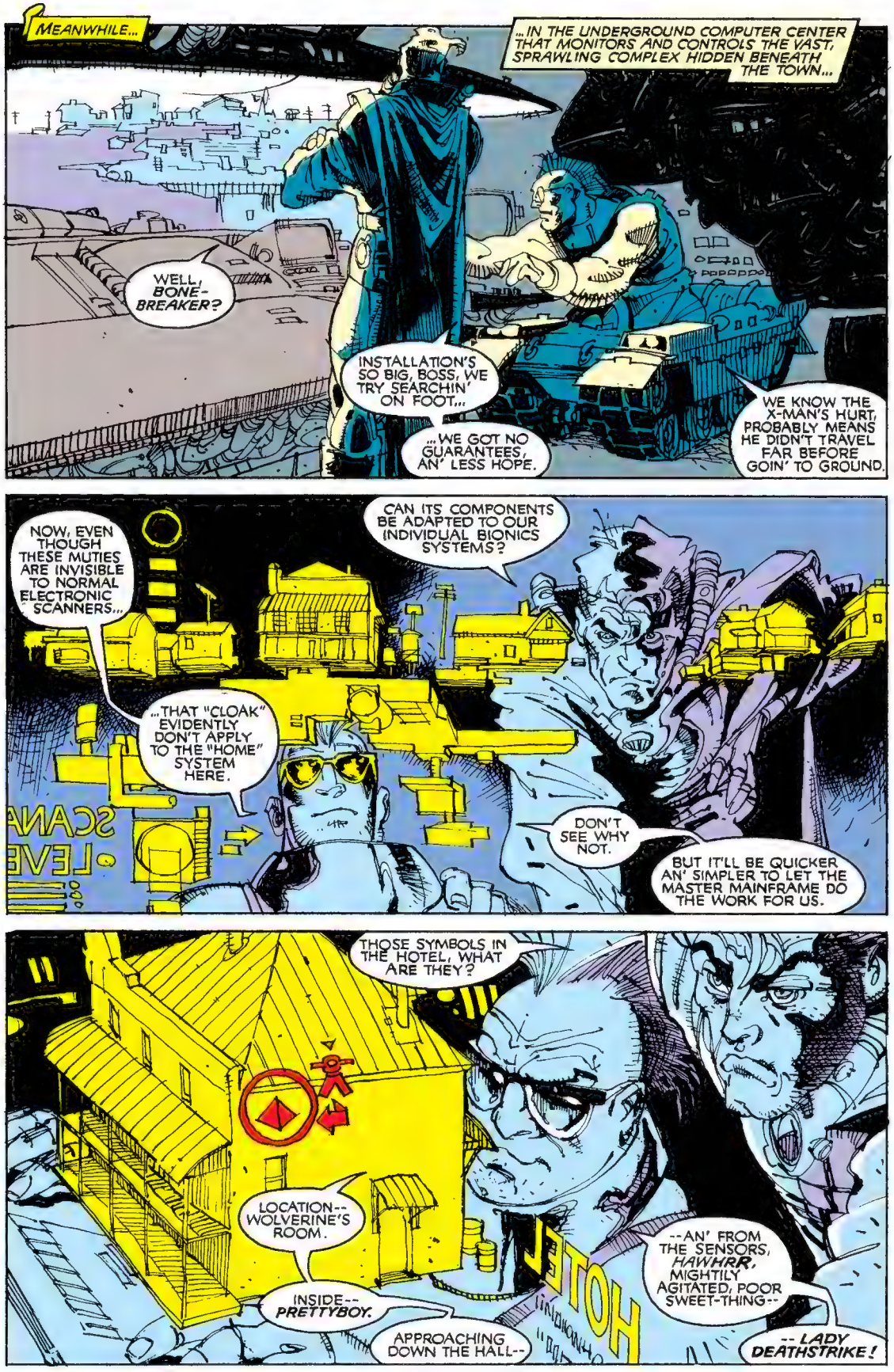
DON'T RUN A LINE ON ME, GIRL--
--I WANT THE TRUTH!
SNIKT!


YAEEEE!
THOSE BLADES--
--THEY LIKE CAME RIGHT OUT OF HIS HAND--
--GROSS!
FAZAM!
WHOWUMF!

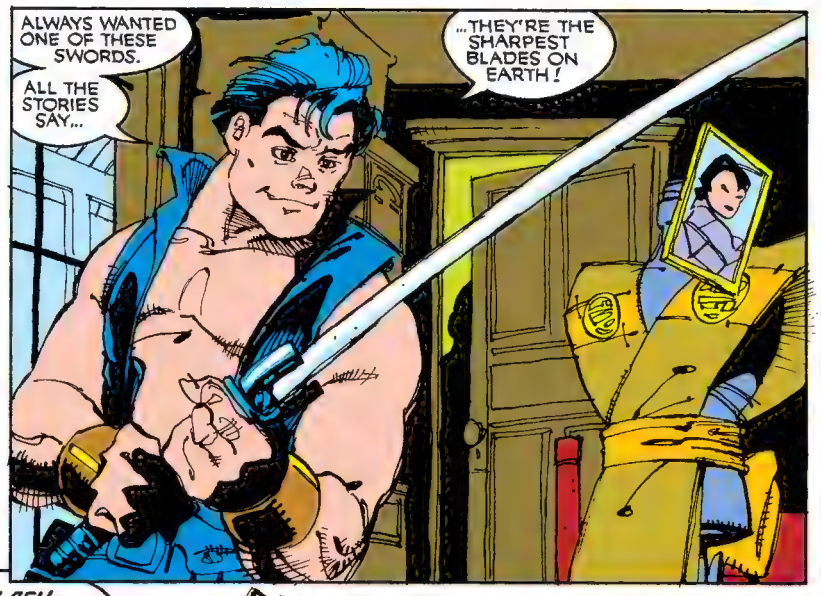

Oh, GEEZ, MY FIREWORKS-- I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN--
--THE HECK WITH THAT, I DID TOO MEAN IT--


--'CAUSE YOU LIKE GOT NO RIGHT SCARING A GIRL, WHEN ALL SHE'S DOING IS TRYING TO HELP!
TOLDJA, JERK.
SOME PEOPLE I GUESS NEVER LEARN.

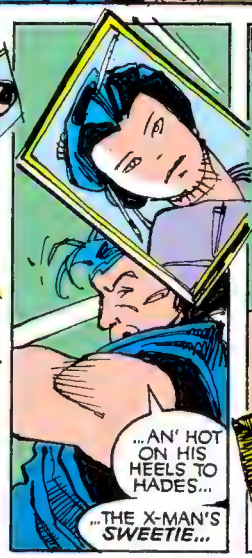

MY MISTAKE.
IT SURE WAS!
NEXT TIME...
...I'LL DO BETTER.
IF I LIVE...
...SO LONG.

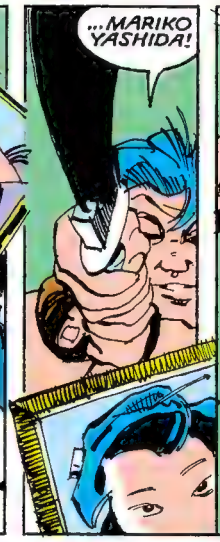

MEANWHILE...
...IN THE UNDERGROUND COMPUTER CENTER THAT MONITORS AND CONTROLS THE VAST, SPRAWLING COMPLEX HIDDEN BENEATH THE TOWN...
WELL, BONE-BREAKER?
INSTALLATION'S SO BIG, BOSS, WE TRY SEARCHIN' ON FOOT...
...WE GOT NO GUARANTEES, AN' LESS HOPE.
WE KNOW THE X-MAN'S HURT, PROBABLY MEANS HE DIDN'T TRAVEL FAR BEFORE GOIN' TO GROUND.
NOW, EVEN THOUGH THESE MUTIES ARE INVISIBLE TO NORMAL ELECTRONIC SCANNERS...
...THAT "CLOAK" EVIDENTLY DON'T APPLY TO THE "HOME" SYSTEM HERE.
CAN ITS COMPONENTS BE ADAPTED TO OUR INDIVIDUAL BIONICS SYSTEMS?
DON'T SEE WHY NOT.
BUT IT'LL BE QUICKER AN' SIMPLER TO LET THE MASTER MAINFRAME DO THE WORK FOR US.
THOSE SYMBOLS IN THE HOTEL, WHAT ARE THEY?
LOCATION-- WOLVERINE'S ROOM.
INSIDE-- PRETTYBOY.
APPROACHING DOWN THE HALL--
--AN' FROM THE SENSORS, HAWHRR, MIGHTILY AGITATED, POOR SWEET-THING--
-- LADY DEATHSTRIKE!

NICE PIECE OF WORK.


ALWAYS WANTED ONE OF THESE SWORDS.
ALL THE STORIES SAY...
...THEY'RE THE SHARPEST BLADES ON EARTH!

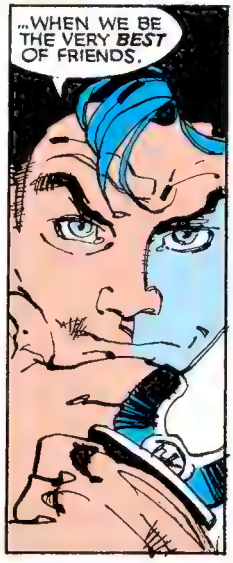
LET'S GIVE IT A SHOT!
SLISH-SLASH-- NOT TOO SHABBY--
--WOLVERINE'S HISTORY!

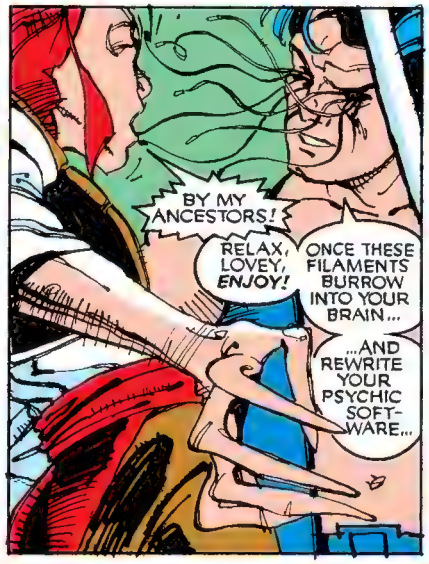

...AN' HOT ON HIS HEELS TO HADES...
...THE X-MAN'S SWEETIE...

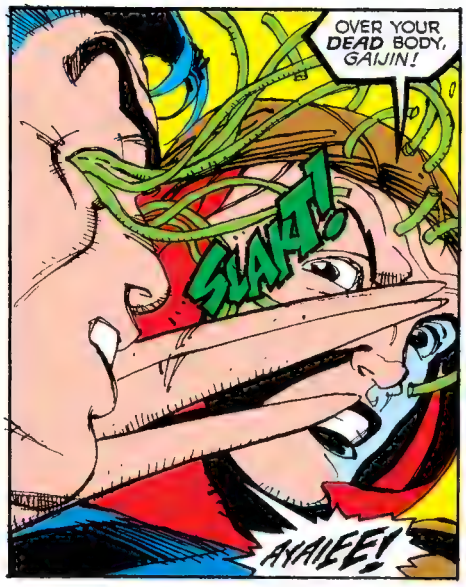

...MARIKO YASHIDA!

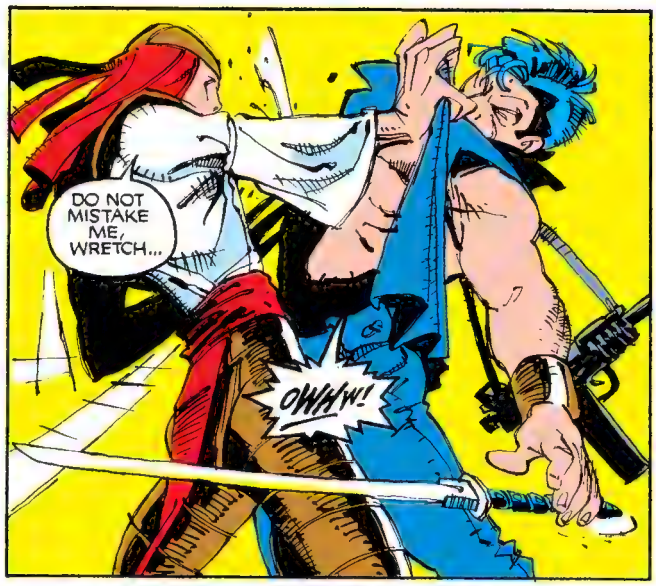
THAP!

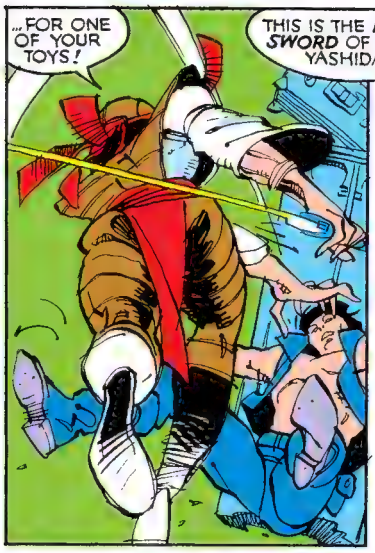
I WANT THE SWORD, PRETTYBOY.
FINDER'S-KEEPERS, HONEY-BUNCH.
BUT, HEY, NO NEED FOR US TO FIGHT...

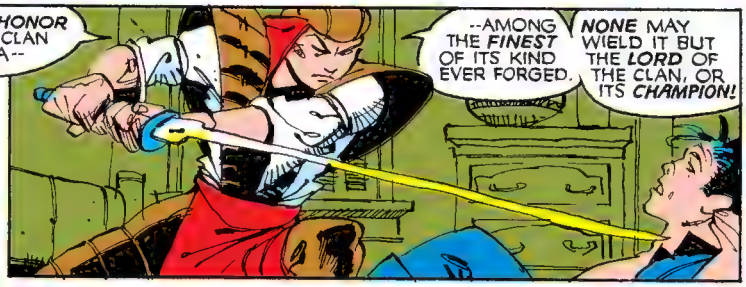

...WHEN WE BE THE VERY BEST OF FRIENDS.


BY MY ANCESTORS!
RELAX, LOVEY, ENJOY!
ONCE THESE FILAMENTS BURROW INTO YOUR BRAIN...
...AND REWRITE YOUR PSYCHIC SOFT-WARE...


OVER YOUR DEAD BODY, GAIJIN!
SLAKT!
AYAIEE!


DO NOT MISTAKE ME, WRETCH...
OWAW!

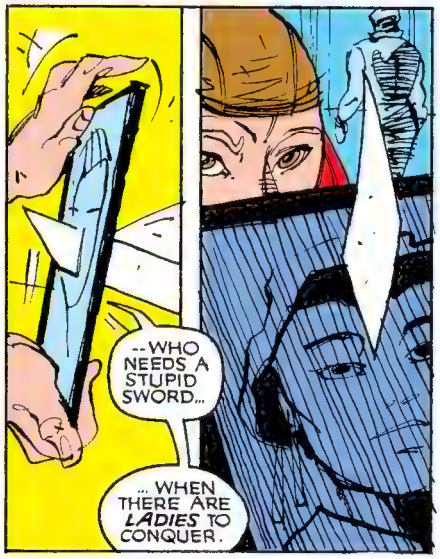

...FOR ONE OF YOUR TOYS!
THIS IS THE HONOR SWORD OF CLAN YASHIDA--

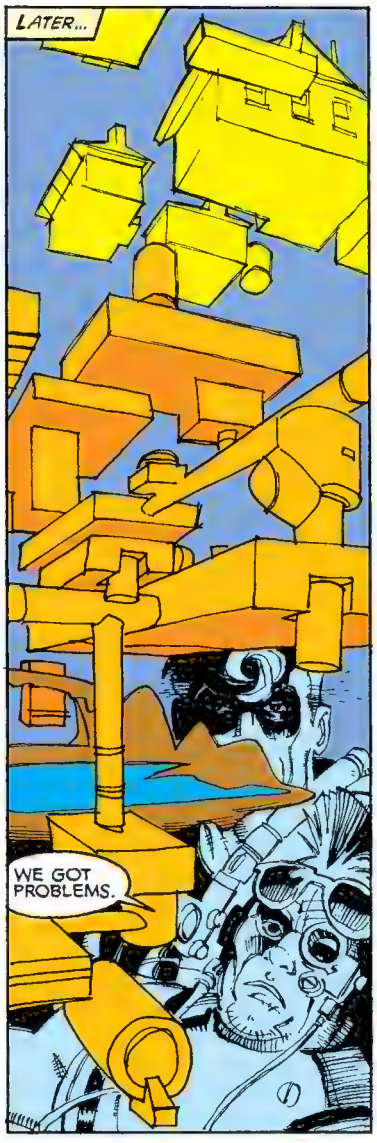

--AMONG THE FINEST OF ITS KIND EVER FORGED.
NONE MAY WIELD IT BUT THE LORD OF THE CLAN, OR ITS CHAMPION!

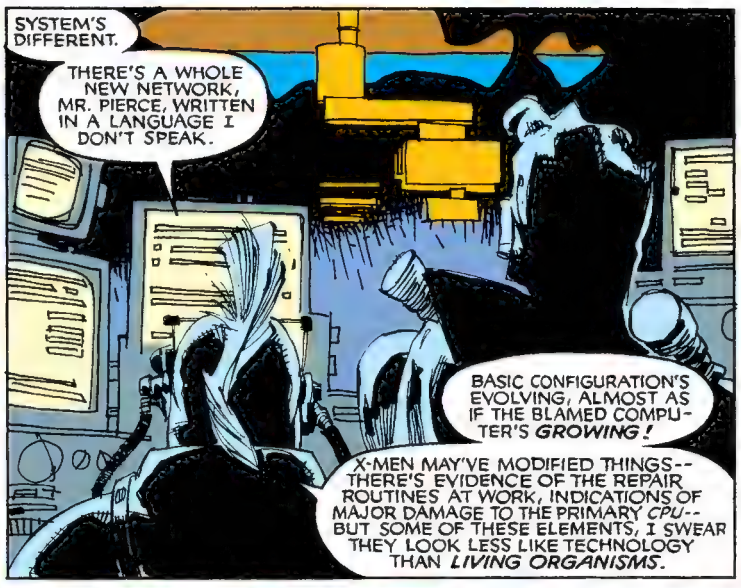
THEN, SWEETS, YOU GOT ABOUT AS MUCH RIGHT TO IT...
...AS ME... SO WHERE'S THE BEEF?

AT LEAST, I AM DAIMYO--
--NOBLE-BORN TO A HOUSE AS OLD AND RESPECTED AS THE YASHIDAS.
YOU ARE LESS THAN NOTHING.
AND WILL NOT TOUCH THIS BLADE AGAIN.

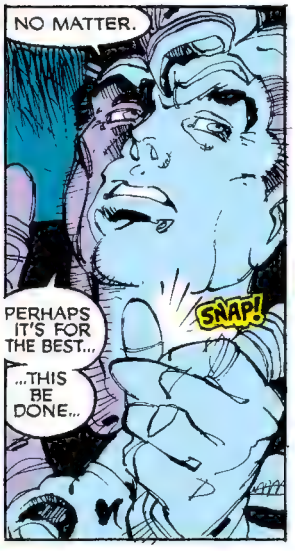
ON PERIL OF MY LIFE, RIGHT?
SURE, WHY NOT, WHAT THE HECK--

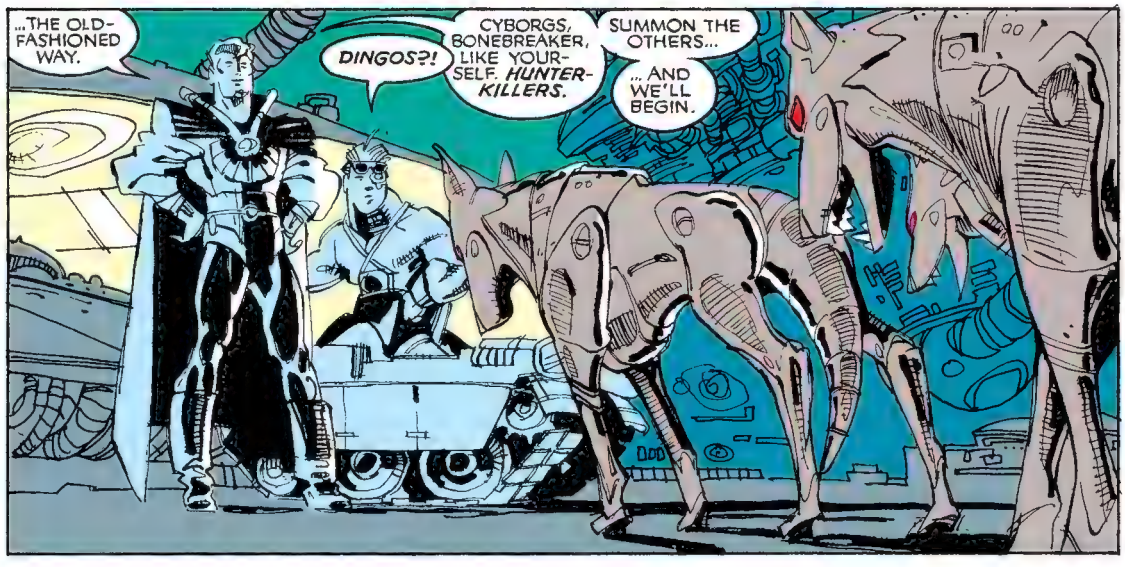

--WHO NEEDS A STUPID SWORD...
... WHEN THERE ARE LADIES TO CONQUER.


LATER...
WE GOT PROBLEMS.


SYSTEM'S DIFFERENT.
THERE'S A WHOLE NEW NETWORK, MR. PIERCE, WRITTEN IN A LANGUAGE I DON'T SPEAK.
BASIC CONFIGURATION'S EVOLVING, ALMOST AS IF THE BLAMED COMPUTER'S GROWING!
X-MEN MAY'VE MODIFIED THINGS--THERE'S EVIDENCE OF THE REPAIR ROUTINES AT WORK, INDICATIONS OF MAJOR DAMAGE TO THE PRIMARY CPU--BUT SOME OF THESE ELEMENTS, I SWEAR THEY LOOK LESS LIKE TECHNOLOGY THAN LIVING ORGANISMS.

THIS IS VERY WEIRD.
I DON'T LIKE IT.
YOU'RE SAYING, THEN...
...YOUR PRECIOUS COMPUTER CAN'T LOCATE OUR QUARRY.
SORRY.


NO MATTER.
PERHAPS IT'S FOR THE BEST...
...THIS BE DONE...
SNAP!


...THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY.
DINGOS?!
CYBORGS, BONEBREAKER, LIKE YOURSELF. HUNTER-KILLERS.
SUMMON THE OTHERS...
...AND WE'LL BEGIN.

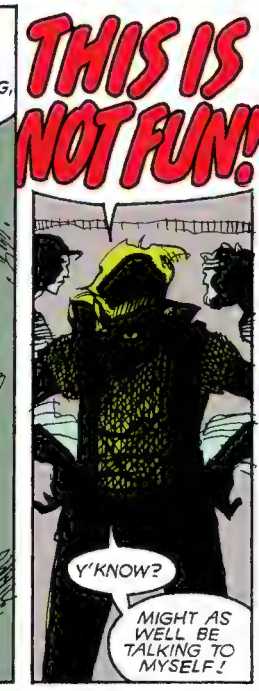
HEY!

EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING, Y'KNOW, BUT WOULD SOMEBODY MIND CLUING ME IN ABOUT WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON HERE?!!?
I MEAN, LIKE, F'R INSTANCE, A GIRL CLOSES HER EYES TO CATCH SOME LIKE REALLY SERIOUSLY NEEDED Z'S, I MEAN, I FIGURE I'M ENTITLED, IT AIN'T AS THOUGH I HAVEN'T LIKE BEEN WORKING MY BEE-HIND TO THE BONE TRYING TO KEEP A CERTAIN PERSON WHO OUT OF COURTESY SHALL REMAIN NAMELESS...
AN' ZAMMO, LIKE HERE WE ALL ARE IN THE WIDE OPEN SPACES...
... LIKE BREATHING!
... WHERE INCIDENTALLY THOSE TERMINATOROIDS CAN PROB'LY SPOT US FROM LIKE A ZILLION MILES AWAY...

... AN' YOU'RE PLAYING "MR. MEDIATOR" WITH GRAM'PA GEEK!
THAT'S RIGHT, DON'T SAY A WORD, THINK ABOUT YOURSELVES...

... NEVER ABOUT ME, oh NO, FORGET THAT I'M THE ONE...
... HAS TO GO SWIPE FOOD AN' WATER AN' MEDICINE AN' STUFF--

-- NO MATTER HOW SCARED I FEEL.
I MEAN, I DON'T WANT TO UPSET YOU OR ANYTHING, PALS, BUT

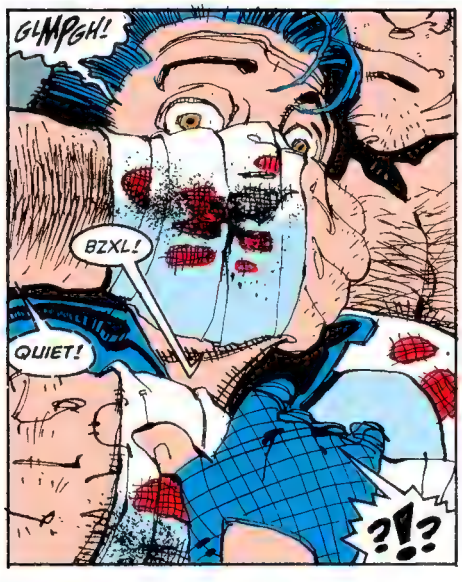

THIS IS NOT FUN!
Y'KNOW?
MIGHT AS WELL BE TALKING TO MYSELF!

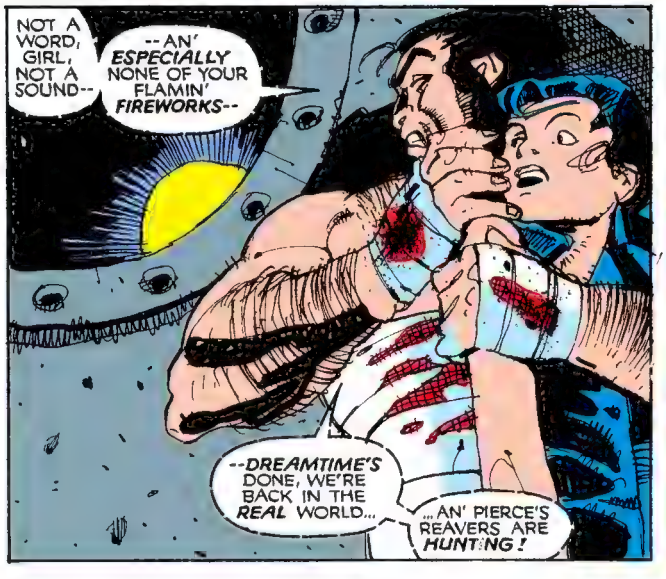
HEY-- WHERE'D THE SUN GO?
IS IT NIGHT ALREADY?
WOW!
NICE STARS.

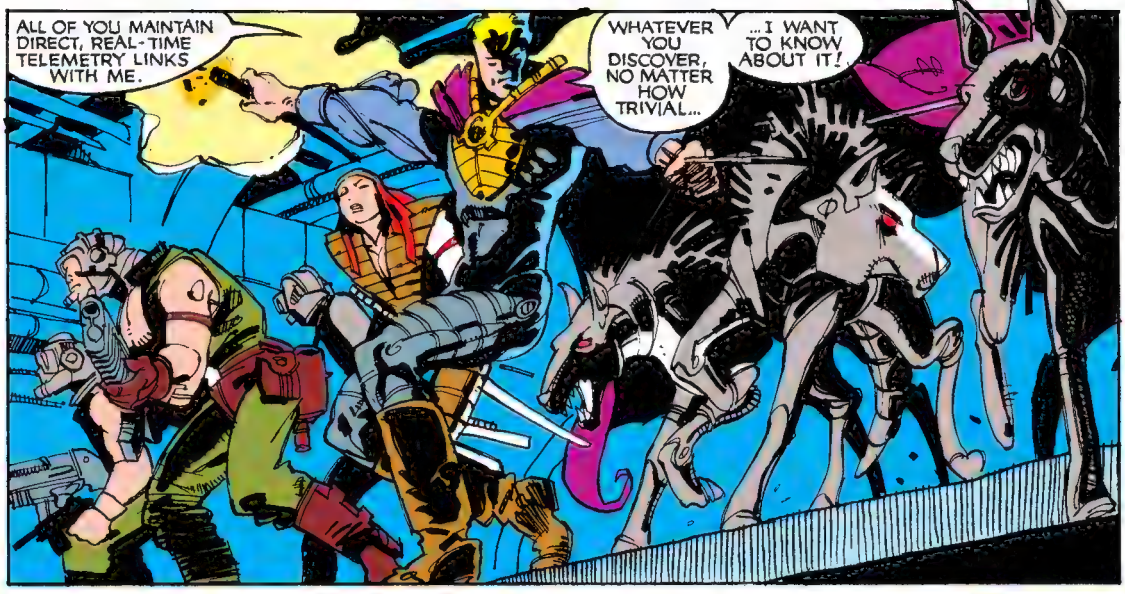
DON'T SEE 'EM LIKE THIS BACK IN LA-LA LAND.
TOO MUCH SMOG--
YIKES!
FOOMP

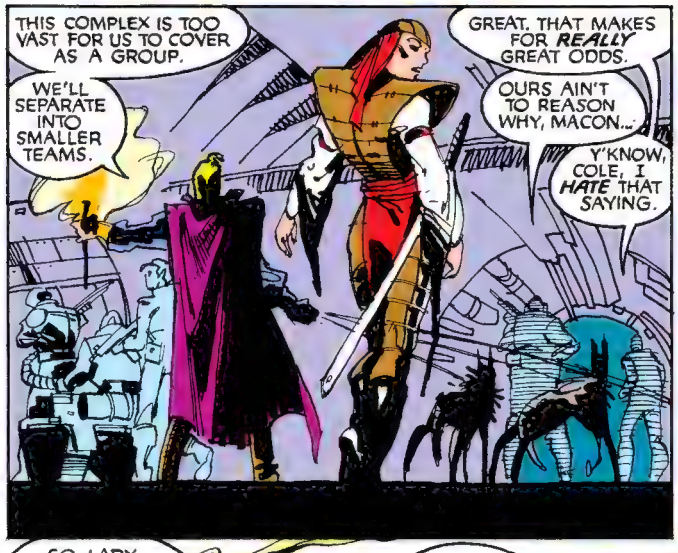
Y'KNOW, LIGHTING A FIRE MAY NOT BE THE MOST BRILLIANT IDEA.
WHERE'S MR. GATEWAY?
HE'S OUTTA THE PICTURE.
IT'S JUST YOU AN' ME, KID.

THE HECK YOU SAY!
POW
FAM
ZAP
PAM
BAM
I'M GOIN' NOWHERE, DOIN' NOTHIN'--
--ESPECIALLY WITH YOU--
--TILL I GET A REAL EXPLANATION!


GLMPGH!
BZXL!
QUIET!
?!?

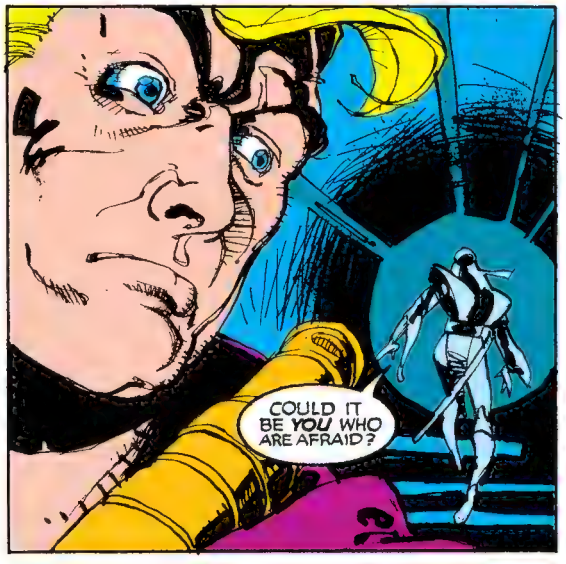

NOT A WORD, GIRL, NOT A SOUND--
--AN' ESPECIALLY NONE OF YOUR FLAMIN' FIREWORKS--
--DREAMTIME'S DONE, WE'RE BACK IN THE REAL WORLD...
...AN' PIERCE'S REAVERS ARE HUNTING!

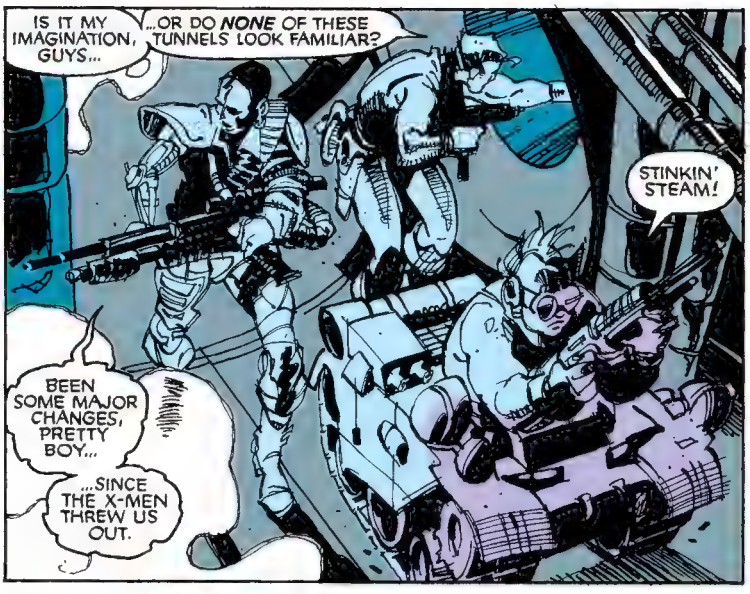

ALL OF YOU MAINTAIN DIRECT, REAL-TIME TELEMETRY LINKS WITH ME.
WHATEVER YOU DISCOVER, NO MATTER HOW TRIVIAL...
...I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT IT!

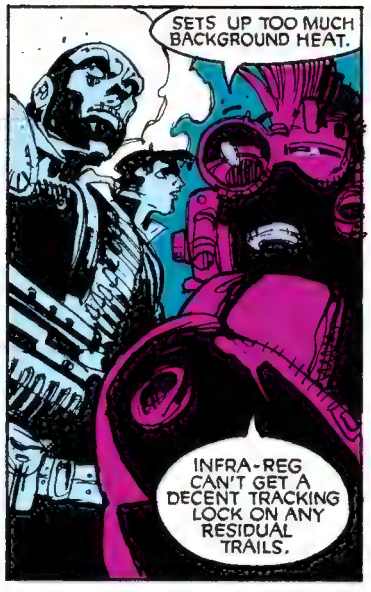

THIS COMPLEX IS TOO VAST FOR US TO COVER AS A GROUP.
WE'LL SEPARATE INTO SMALLER TEAMS.
GREAT. THAT MAKES FOR *REALLY* GREAT ODDS.
OURS AIN'T TO REASON WHY, MACON...
Y'KNOW, COLE, I *HATE* THAT SAYING.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY WITH ME, YURIKO.
I PREFER, LORD, TO GO MY OWN WAY.
THEN TAKE ONE OF MY CYBORG DINGOS.
FOR ASSISTANCE. AND, IF NECESSARY, PROTECTION.
THANK YOU, NO.

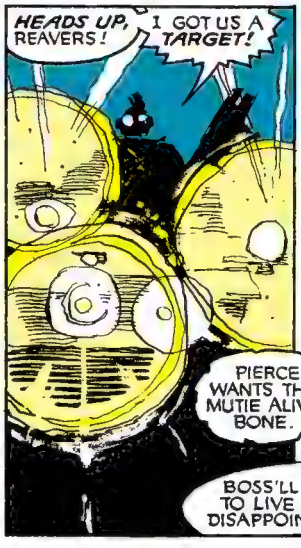
SO, LADY DEATHSTRIKE, YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU'RE A MATCH FOR WOLVERINE?
WHY IS IT YOU ARE SO CONCERNED, LORD?

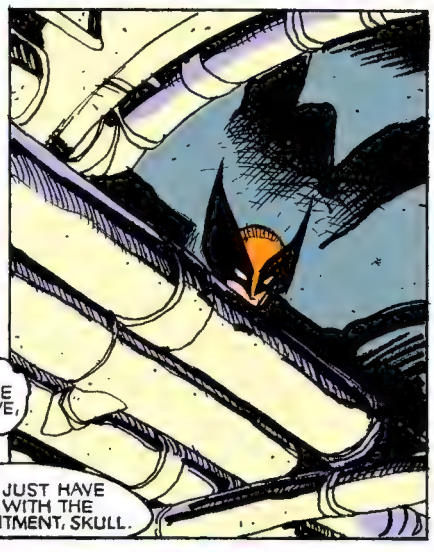

COULD IT BE *YOU* WHO ARE AFRAID?

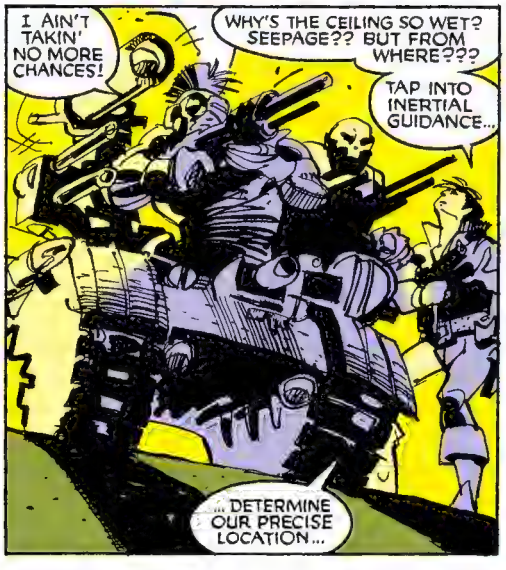

IS IT MY IMAGINATION, GUYS...
...OR DO NONE OF THESE TUNNELS LOOK FAMILIAR?
STINKIN' STEAM!
BEEN SOME MAJOR CHANGES, PRETTY BOY...
...SINCE THE X-MEN THREW US OUT.

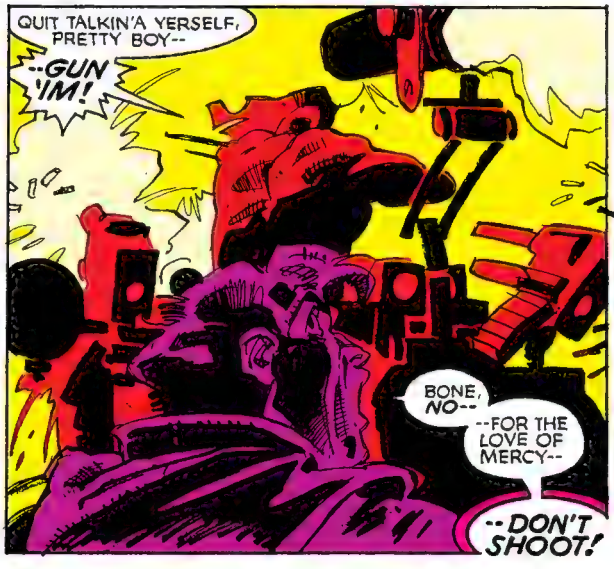

SETS UP TOO MUCH BACKGROUND HEAT.
INFRA-REG CAN'T GET A DECENT TRACKING LOCK ON ANY RESIDUAL TRAILS.

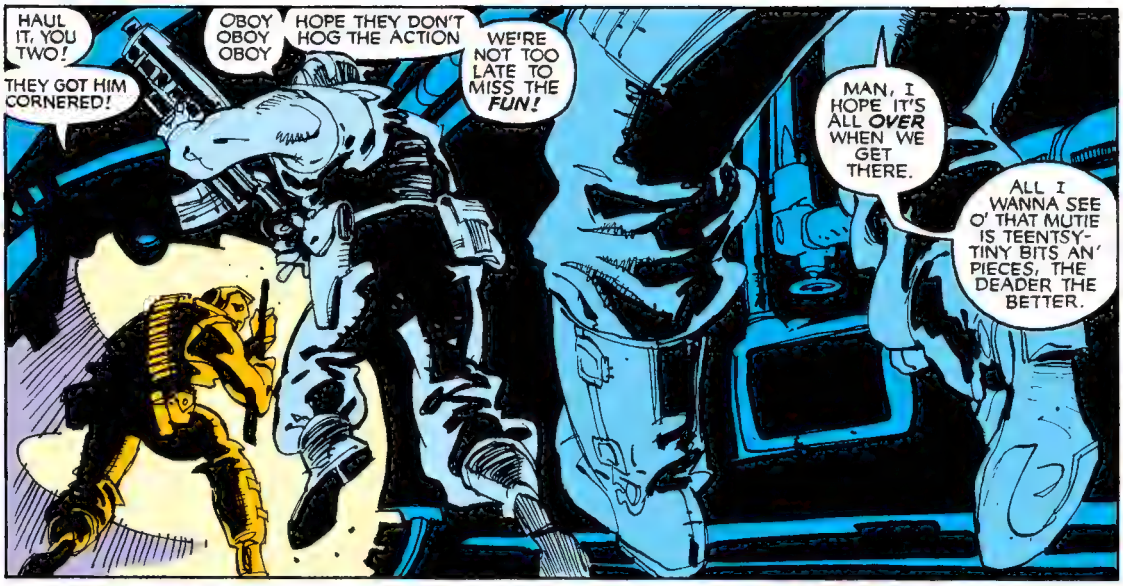
WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?
RELAX. SEEN TOO MANY SCARY MOVIES...
...THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.
WE GET AMBUSHED, SKULL, IT'S OUR PROBLEM. AN' OUR BUTTS!


HEADS UP, REAVERS!
I GOT US A TARGET!
PIERCE WANTS THE MUTIE ALIVE, BONE.

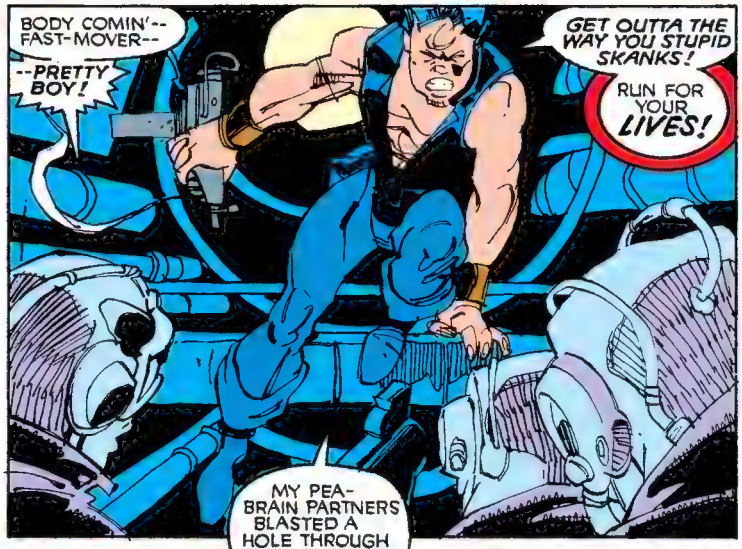

BOSS'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE DISAPPOINTMENT, SKULL.


I AIN'T TAKIN' NO MORE CHANCES!
WHY'S THE CEILING SO WET? SEEPAGE?? BUT FROM WHERE???
TAP INTO INERTIAL GUIDANCE...
...DETERMINE OUR PRECISE LOCATION...


QUIT TALKIN'A YERSELF, PRETTY BOY--
--GUN 'IM!
BONE, NO--
--FOR THE LOVE OF MERCY--
--DON'T SHOOT!


HAUL IT, YOU TWO!
THEY GOT HIM CORNERED!
OBOY OBOY OBOY
HOPE THEY DON'T HOG THE ACTION
WE'RE NOT TOO LATE TO MISS THE FUN!
MAN, I HOPE IT'S ALL OVER WHEN WE GET THERE.
ALL I WANNA SEE O' THAT MUTIE IS TEENTSY-TINY BITS AN' PIECES, THE DEADER THE BETTER.

SCARED, MACON?
AIN'T'CHU, BRO'?
FEEL THAT BREEZE?
WHASSAT NOISE, SARGE?


BODY COMIN'-- FAST-MOVER--
--PRETTY BOY!
GET OUTTA THE WAY YOU STUPID SKANKS!
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

MY PEA-BRAIN PARTNERS BLASTED A HOLE THROUGH THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE--
--IT'S FLOODING THE TUNNEL!!

Bullpen Bulletins

"I don't care how strong he is--six tons of wheat ought to hold him for a while."

--Captain Marvel
CAPTAIN MARVEL SPECIAL #1

Hi True Believers!

Y' know , for the past few months I've been hitting a few comic book conventions all over the country (and don't be a wisenheimer and ask me if they hit back!). Now I'd like to share a few thoughts with you, thoughts that occured to me at those wild and wonderful gatherings.

First of all, if any of you have the idea that comic book conventions are primarily for kids, forget it! The nature and character of the attendees is a never-ending source of pride to me. I mean we're talking young adults, teenagers, college students, professional people, parents of all ages joining in the fun with their youngsters, and assorted literature and art lovers of every race, sex and nationality. Whenever I'm lucky enough to mingle with the great gang of comicbookpersons and their fans, I can't help but think how wonderful it would be if all of life could be like a comic con. Just think--no hassles, no hang ups, no bitterness, bigotry or bull dung. Just a bunch of happy humans, meeting on common ground, sharing a common passion, each finding something in these amazing publications, in the comic books they read and enjoy , something to excite them, to provoke them, to transport them away from their everyday problems, to replace the humdrum elements in their lives with the dazzling color and brilliance of fantasy!

No matter how harried and hapless we may be in our own workaday world, for one brief interval of time, a love for comic books brings us together and allows us to savor a world of imagery and romance, a world that we can share through the miracle of the printed page!

Y'know something? I love comics!

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

ITEM: Friday, April 14 was the date of the second annual Mighty Marvel T-shirt Swapathon, and what a spectacle it was! Emceed by Fabulous *Fabian Nicieza*, the Swapathon pitted our ever-competitive Marvel staffers against each other in grueling, winner-take-T-shirt contests.

Memorable moments included Assistant Editor *Renee Witterstaetter*'s heartful rendition of "I'm a Little Teapot," Reproduction Department Administrator *Francine Burke*'s convincing impression of Editor in Chief *Tom DeFalco*, Submissions Editor *Evan Skolnick* knocking an apple off Executive Editor *Mark Gruenwald*'s head with a rubber frisbee, Editor *Howard Mackie*'s bellybutton lint, bullpenner *Harry Eisenstein*'s wailing imitation of Traffic Manager *Virginia Romita*, and Assistant Editor *Jim Di-Giovanna*'s brutal stare-down of fellow Assistant Editor *Sara Tuchinsky*!

Fun--as well as pizza--was had by all who participated. Sure, there were a few embarrassing moments...but at least no one *videotaped* the bizarre proceedings. As far as we know, anyway...

ITEM: Crafty *Carl Potts*, editor of such titles as THE PUNISHER, ALPHA FLIGHT and POWER PACK, gave up his days of bachelorhood April 22, and married Cunning *Cathleen Meloni* in Westchester, New York. Even as we speak the blissful newlyweds are honeymooning in our fiftieth state, Hawaii. Congrats to Carl and Cathy from Marvelites everywhere!

Pro File

Margaret Clark

Editor on: AKIRA, ALIEN LEGION, HAVOK AND WOLVERINE, ELSEWHERE PRINCE, STAR WARS, Moebius' BLUEBERRY Graphic Novels, ELEKTRA: ACT OF LOVE

Marvel freelance credits (past): DOOFENDERS OF THE EARTH, WATER CLOSET AVENGERS, SOLO AVENGERS STARRING DR. DOPEY, DOCTOR ZERO, ST. GEORGE, POWERLINE

Marvel freelance credits (present): CRITCAL MASS

My place of birth is: In the dark. The hospital I was born in lost their lights during a thunderstorm.

People who knew me in high school thought I was: One of the meanest people alive.

My hobbies are: Circling want ads in the *New York Times*.

My pet peeves are: I'm not allowed to have pets in my building.

My favorite performers are: *Mike Rockwitz*, Tiffany, Penn and Teller.

The last good book I read was: *The White Goddess* by Robert Graves.

The last good movie I saw was: The trailers before *Pet Sematary*.

If they were making a movie of my life, I'd like to see my part played by: Lily Tomlin, as suggested by *Adam Blaustein*.

My oddest habit is: Screaming at the top of my lungs, "It's comics , not brain surgery!"

My greatest accomplishment outside the comics field is: Taunting *John Wellington* to go off the *high* water slide at Action Park.

The reason I got into comics was: 1982.

The biggest influences on my work include: Stephen Hawkins, the clock and space.

The single work of which I am most proud is: That I finally filled out this stinking form for *Evan*..

My greatest unfulfilled ambition in the comics field is: I didn't realize I was in a field, oh yeah, look at the cow... .

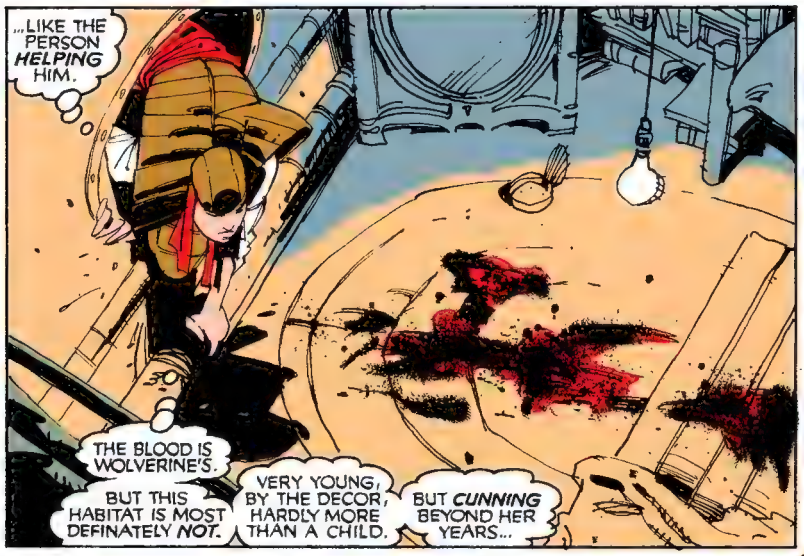
The worst part of my job is: Why gosh! There's no *one* worst part of my job.

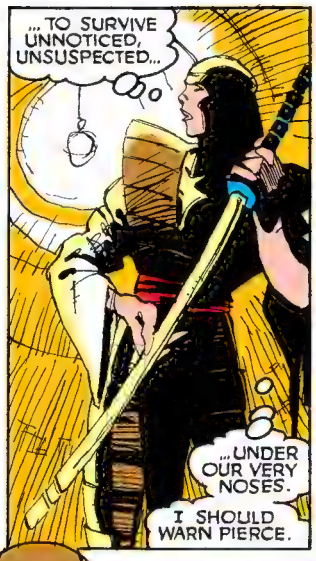
When nobody's looking I like to: Dangle the Antioch intern out the 10th floor window by her ankles.

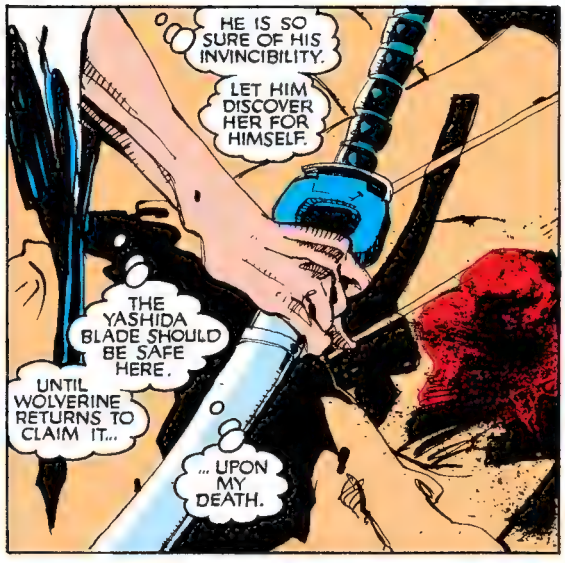
The one thing I really want the world to know about me is: "They" were right in high school

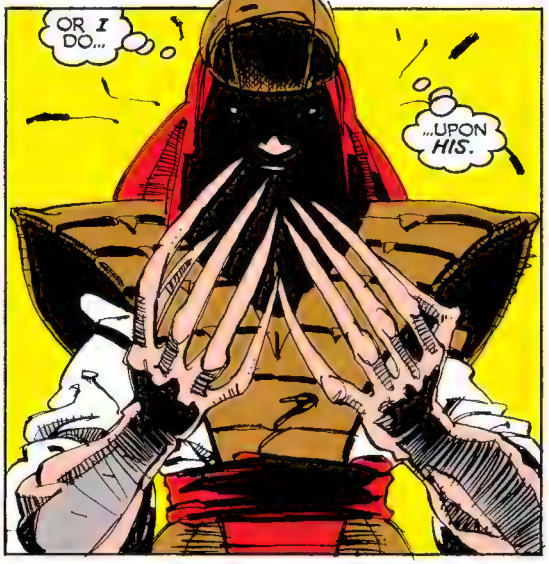
FOOLS!
HAVE THEY FORGOTTEN, IT IS THE WOUNDED FOE...
...WHO IS EVER THE MOST DANGEROUS.

SERVE THEM RIGHT FOR TAKING WOLVERINE FOR GRANTED.
THE WAY TO FIND HIM...
...IS TO THINK LIKE HIM.
OR PERHAPS...

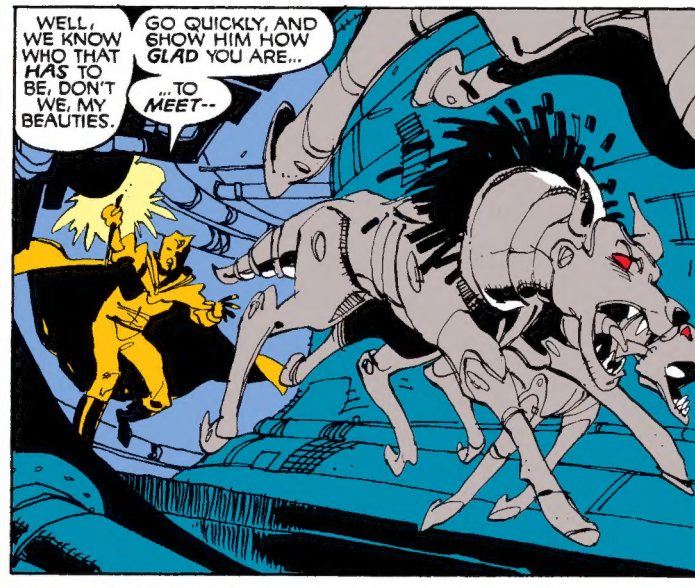

...LIKE THE PERSON HELPING HIM.
THE BLOOD IS WOLVERINE'S.
BUT THIS HABITAT IS MOST DEFINATELY NOT.
VERY YOUNG, BY THE DECOR, HARDLY MORE THAN A CHILD.
BUT CUNNING BEYOND HER YEARS...

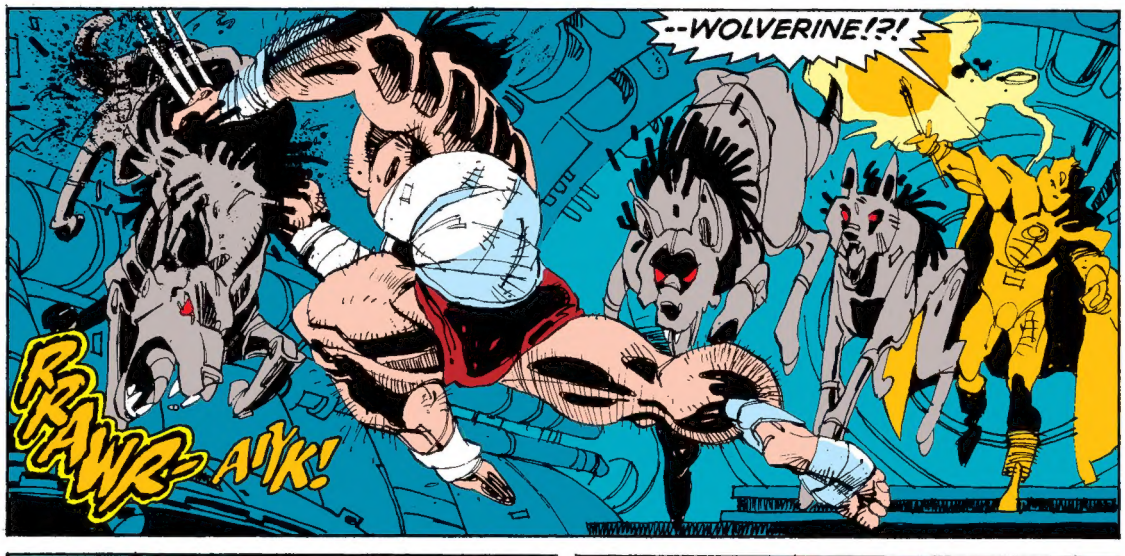

...TO SURVIVE UNNOTICED, UNSUSPECTED...
...UNDER OUR VERY NOSES.
I SHOULD WARN PIERCE.


HE IS SO SURE OF HIS INVINCIBILITY.
LET HIM DISCOVER HER FOR HIMSELF.
THE YASHIDA BLADE SHOULD BE SAFE HERE.
UNTIL WOLVERINE RETURNS TO CLAIM IT...
... UPON MY DEATH.


OR I DO...
...UPON HIS.

SPEAKING OF PIERCE...
CRETINS.
TO FALL FOR SO OLD AND OBVIOUS A TRICK.
I THOUGHT I BUILT THEM BETTER-- WHAT'S THIS, MY PETS, A SCENT?


WELL, WE KNOW WHO THAT HAS TO BE, DON'T WE, MY BEAUTIES.
GO QUICKLY, AND SHOW HIM HOW GLAD YOU ARE...
...TO MEET--

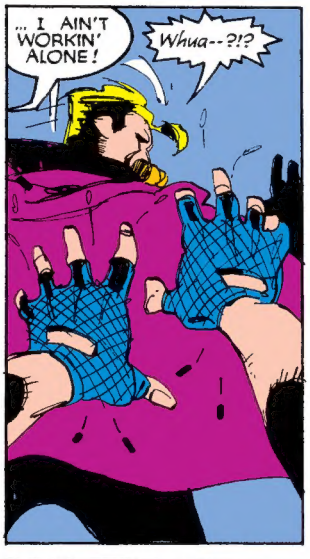

--WOLVERINE!?!
RRAWR-
A'YK!

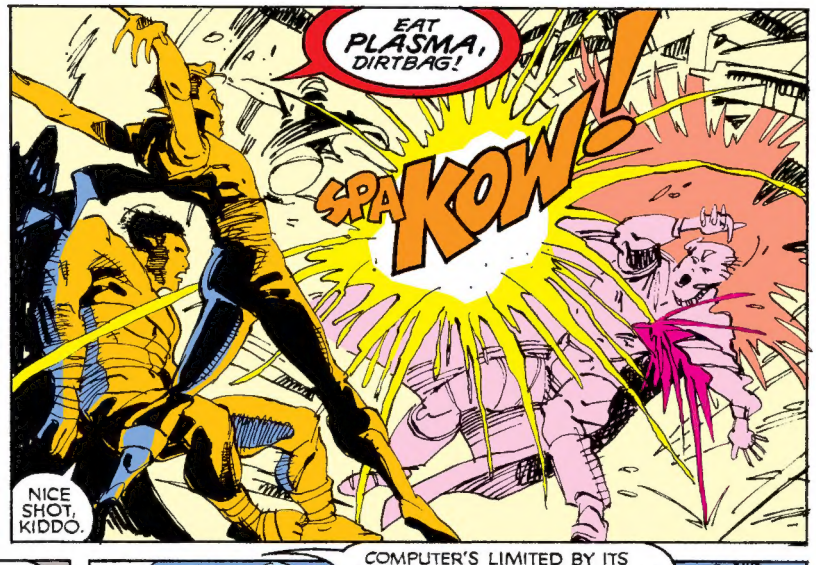
SLAK!

KRAK!
ANY MORE TOYS, PIERCE?

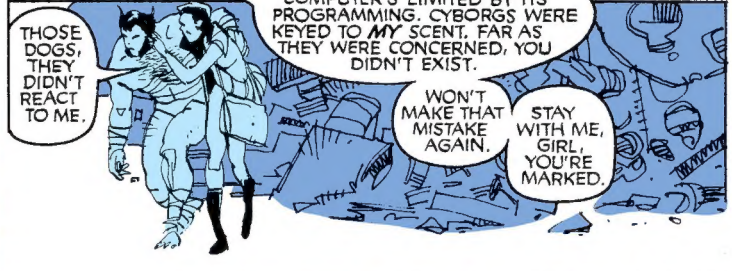
OR THIS ONCE, YOU GONNA BE MAN ENOUGH TO TAKE ME ON YOURSELF?
C'MON, WHY HESITATE? I CAN BARELY STAND.
MAKES THIS A FAIR FIGHT.
NOBODY MOCKS ME, MUTIE-- ESPECIALLY YOU!

THEN DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT IT, BUB.
'COURSE, I SHOULD WARN YOU...


... I AIN'T WORKIN' ALONE!
Whua--?!?


EAT PLASMA, DIRTBAG!
SPA KOW!
NICE SHOT, KIDDO.

HE'S BURIED UNDER THE WALL, D'YOU THINK I... KILLED HIM?
NICE IDEA. WOULDN'T COUNT ON IT.
YOU'RE BLEEDING AGAIN.
I'LL SURVIVE.
YEAH, RIGHT.


THOSE DOGS, THEY DIDN'T REACT TO ME.
COMPUTER'S LIMITED BY ITS PROGRAMMING. CYBORGS WERE KEYED TO MY SCENT. FAR AS THEY WERE CONCERNED, YOU DIDN'T EXIST.
WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.
STAY WITH ME, GIRL, YOU'RE MARKED.

CAN YOU MAKE IT ON YOUR OWN?
I CAN TRY.
WHAT THE HECK--
--I GOT NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO.
BUT YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS MACHO ATTITUDE. I MEAN, IT IS LIKE SO LAME...!
NEXT: STORM WARNINGS!

BOB HARRAS: editor — DARYL EDELMAN: assistant editor

X-MAIL

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP—
387 Park Avenue South — New York, New York — 10016
Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear creators of X-Men,

DON'T KILL ROGUE!

Eric Hall
2698 Del Mar Dr.
Grand Junction, CO

But. . .what *is* your point, Eric?

Dear X-People,

1. (Previews No.2: "The ensuing battle leaves a member of the X-Men *very* dead." MARVEL AGE #76: "The X-Men have to stop him at all costs! To do exactly that, one of the X-Men dies! Written by Chris Claremont . . .") Oh no! Not another mutant death . . . Hasn't there been enough gloom, doom, and destruction in the X-titles lately? Lessee, who's the most likely victim? Well, it's not gonna be Wolverine, cause he's got his own book and it's not gonna be Longshot, causes Ann Nocenti is goin' to do a series with him, . . . Storm should be safe—she still seems to be Claremont's favorite . . . And isn't there going to be a Colossus graphic novel or mini-series? Havok? If I only knew if the series in MCP is set before or after the current X-MEN storyline . . . That leaves Ali, Betsy and Rogue, with Alex as an outside possibility. Hmmm . . . I've got a hunch it's not going to be Dazzler — Psylocke *seems* to be the most expendable character—Chris surely wouldn't dare to kill off Rogue, would he? After all, she *is* one of the most popular X-Men (in last year's CBG poll she was the mutant with the most votes after Wolvie and also the most popular Marvel heroine)! And yet . . . and yet . . . (It's definitely nail-biting time for natural worriers).

2. (A letter that wasn't sent:) Gentlemen, question-mark. Don't you dare kill off my favorite super hero! If Rogue dies I'll never read anything by Claremont again!! Who is behind the plot to get rid of all the characters in the mutant books (Magik has diappeared, Dani is seriously ill . . . who's next—Kitty? Rachel? Yours, Digusted, Tunbridge Wells. (No. Wrong approach—that'll only antagonize Chris and he'll kill her off for sure. But how about this: Oh, Mr. Claremont, please, please, PLEASE do not let poor Rogue die! I'll promise to buy every issue of the X-MEN and I'll even buy Wolverine regularly! Your obedient slave . . . Whoah! That's waaay over the top! And let's not forget the realities of the comics industry, Tilman: That story has already been written and very probably at the printer right now. So your letter isn't going to make any difference. Might as well forget it . . .

3. (Some weeks later, X-MEN #247 has arrived at the shop.) AAAARRRGGH!!! He did it! That (expletive deleted) actually did it! Oh woe! Boy, is he going to get a letter from me!

4. (Some hours pass in silence as the extent of what hapened and the ramifications sink in. However, when the letter is finally written, the result is unsatisfying.)

5. Rogue and Me.

There was a time when it was extremely difficult to get X-MEN in Germany (I mention in passing that the title only recently became part of the package sent to German news agents who carry American Marvels). In those far-off days, I bought the title rarely, whenever I came across a particularly intriguing issue, but without any effort to acquire a complete collection. That all changed when I went on a vacation in England in 1983 and I bought a bagful of comics as reading matter for a train journey from London to Manchester. This included X-MEN #s 172 and 173, chronicling Rogue's baptism of fire as an X-Man (well, that's what I remember the story for), and a number of other issues that, taken together, turned me into a convert to the X-MEN, Chris Claremont, and later to the other mutant titles. Also Rogue—whom I had previously known only as a (formidable) villain—almost instantaneously became my favorite super hero. I wrote my first fan letter after X-MEN #182, the first of a line of missives centering on Rogue, which never got published, but which may have driven Louise Simonson and Ann Nocenti to distraction.

6. Wolverine and . . . What Were Their Names?

Now is it just me, or are there other fans who feel a bit uneasy about the somewhat excessive prominence given to Logan in publicity and merchandising? I know I'm always annoyed when I go into a comics shop looking for, say, a T-Shirt with Rogue on it, and all I find are a dozen different Wolverine T-shirts. It's not that I dislike Wolvie—there are times when I wish I had adamantium claws like his. (They'd really come in handy to show those inconsiderate people who keep parking their cars across cycle-paths the error of their ways). But the X-Men are supposed to be a team, not a star's backing group; also, other members of the team are closer to my heart (I bought the KITTY PRYDE AND WOLVERINE limited series because *Kitty* was in it). And Wolverine certainly doesn't have a monopoly on mystery: we know very little about Psylocke, almost nothing of Rogue's past (not even her real name) and Longshot remains quite an enigmatic person. So now Wolverine has his own title, maybe X-Men should focus more on the others.

7. "Death, Death, and More Death"

Well, in spite of the recent trend toward humor in superheroic fiction (as so wonderfully exemplified by EXCALIBUR and SHE-HULK), the general tone of the mutant titles is still quite dark. These past few years, there has been an awful lot of gloom and doom, death and loss—at times a bit too much for my taste. I won't even try to list the more important deaths and other tragedies, pausing only to mention the unfilled gap left by Magik's tragic but probably inevitable end, in NEW MUTANTS. The X-Men are now a team without Kitty, Kurt, Rachel and Rogue, and I think few people would argue that Psylocke or even Havok offer as much emotional appeal or story potential as any of these four. (Of the four "replacement X-Men", Dazzler and Longshot are definitely more interesting than the other two, Longshot because he is such an unearthly character, and Ali not least because of her being torn between her life as a super hero and her dreams of continuing her musical career.) In particular, I have not yet been able to warm to Betsy. In many ways her character seems to be a paler version of Storm's.

8. Out With a Bang, Not a Whimper

Rogue's abrupt disappearance quite upset me (as you no doubt noticed), but at least she went out in true heroic fashion (I nearly wrote "with her boots on", but then she wore Carol's. . .). Psylocke once (X-MEN ANNUAL #11) divided the team into "born warriors" and those who were forced to be heroes because of circumstances. Rogue fits into the former category (although she would put it in a more down-to-earth fashion, describing herself as an all-out-action junkie in X-MEN #200). But she is also a mass of contradictions: while she enjoys her powers to the hilt, there has been no end of moments when she has had cause to curse them and long for a "normal" life. In fights she has at times been brilliant, while at others she was taken out early because of stupid mistakes or over-confidence. Well, X-MEN #247 saw Rogue at her best, indeed, she turned the fight against Master Mold into her fight, finally going down in a blaze of glory and self sacrifice, (doing what came naturally to her). In the process she displayed some quick tactical thinking and, to judge by the way she willed Ali (and Betsy) to go through with the plan regardless of the cost, maybe even some qualities of leadership. (It could be said that from page 20 onward, she called the shots.)

9. What Now, My Rogue?

All hope is not lost. After all there is no definite proof of Rogue's death, and as the Law of Comics says:

Believe not the death without the body, not just where a villain's concerned,

Of all who have made thus their exit, just Bucky has not yet returned.

Cast doubt on the death (with a body) of a major character, friend. A switch could have happened beforehand, and sombody else met their end.

(Sorry about that—blame Chris for choosing a title from Kipling!) Anyway, we don't know what goes on behind the portal of the Siege Perilous (that *machina ex machina*). Roma described it as a kind of reincarnation machine, while Master Mold described it as a pan-dimensional portal. But I think there is still a chance that Rogue will return sooner or later. I hope it will be sooner; she is too great a character to let her go to waste—and I wouldn't like to wait three years again, as in the case of Mary Jane. . .

10. Well, it's now the 13th already. Time to finish the letter, don't you think? X-MEN #247 was a moving story, but, to quote Alison, "There had to be another way." Long live Rogue!

Tilman Stieve
Bundesstrasse 28
2000 Hamburg, West Germany

Wait! Bucky hasn't come back yet!? Boy, have we got a story for CAPTAIN AMERICA! Anyway, thanks for your comments, Tilman . . . and folks, don't despair, we'll see Rogue again.

NEXT ISSUE: The surprises continue . . . as old friends . . . and old enemies return! Come with us as we journey from Muir Island, where a certain Master of Magnetism pays a visit, to the storm-tossed North Atlantic as a former X-Man makes a dramatic re-entry and to the American Mid-West where a child's mysterious appearance sets a madman's plan for revenge in motion! Plus, there'll be more on Wolverine and Jubilee . . . and Forge returns! All this in just two weeks! Be here for X-MEN #253!

MINUTEMEN
Bluntman